

June 25c

The American Mercury



FATHER COUGHLIN: Holy Medicine Man by JOHN McCARTEN

GERMANY CAN'T WIN!
By Major George Fielding Eliot

Elliott: the President's Problem Child	Herbert Corey
San Francisco, a Dying City	Phil Hamilton
Negroes Reject Communism	George S. Schuyler
Peep Show	Leonard Ross
Education for Ward-Heelers	Will Irwin
Buchmanism	Ernest Sutherland Bates
Misdeal, A Story	André Maurois
Ghost Goes to College	Roy A. Benjamin, Jr.
Pioneer's Return	Adelaide Walker
The General Slocum Disaster	Alan Macdonald
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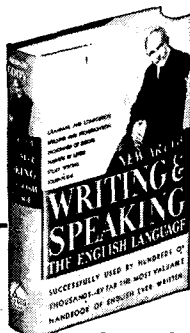
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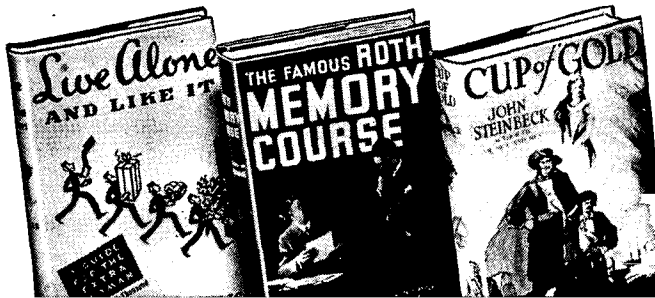
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FATHER COUGHLIN: HOLY MEDICINE MAN

By JOHN McCARTEN

IF consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, the Reverend Charles E. Coughlin has a massive intellect. In the ten years that he has been broadcasting sermons on politics and economics from the Shrine of the Little Flower in Royal Oak, Michigan, he has been as flexible in his convictions as he has been remiss in his facts. He has been a vociferous supporter of democracy and an advocate of the corporate state. He has hailed Franklin Roosevelt as the anointed of God and condemned him as "a liar" and "a scab." He has loudly proclaimed his love of organized labor and denounced the Congress of Industrial Organizations. He has reviled the speculators of Wall Street and made a tidy profit for the Shrine through silver

speculations. He has flaunted his priestly humility and flouted a cardinal of his church. He has boasted of his part in the founding of the United Automobile Workers of America and charged its leaders with being "atheistic communists." He has jeered at Al Smith for being friendly with the Du Ponts and cultivated a cozy intimacy with Harry Bennett, the chief of the private police at Ford's River Rouge headquarters. He has rejoiced that there is no anti-semitic problem in the United States and published his own plagiarism of an attack on the Jews by Paul Joseph Goebbels. He has frequently protested his devotion to the truth and supported the "factuality" of that notorious forgery, the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. He in-

sists, to the embarrassment of many Catholics, that the encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII and Pope Pius XI have inspired all his utterances.

Although he changes most of his opinions as often as he changes his collar, Father Coughlin has one belief to which he has remained persistently faithful. He is firmly convinced that a return to the economy of the Dark Ages will cure all our ills. He acquired this notion while attending St. Michael's College in Toronto, where he was taught by the Basilian Fathers who ran the school that poverty and wealth are acts of God, and that usury, in its ancient sense, is the root of all evil. Since this sort of medieval economic philosophy has its modern counterpart in the economic philosophy of fascism, Coughlin's pronouncements frequently sound like German or Italian propaganda. As a matter of fact, they frequently are. A good part of the material used in Coughlin's recent anti-semitic broadcasts was culled from the publication *World Service*, which is put out by the Nazis in eight languages in order to disseminate their ideas throughout the world. The Father's anti-semitism, which he of course denies, is evidently based on his theory that the Jews brought to an end what he calls "the glories

that characterized the 13th century" by introducing "communist international banking." He finds nothing incongruous in the idea of associating international banking with communism. He uses the term "communistic" after the fashion of Adolf Hitler to describe anything he doesn't like. He once advised his listeners, in all seriousness, that "there are three kinds of communism represented in the world today. There is the industrial communism of Russia, the military communism of Japan, and the financial communism of Wall Street." He has a genius for compounding such absurdities.

Coughlin occupies a negligible position in the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. As pastor of a parish that includes only a couple of hundred families, he is officially among the clerical small fry, even in his own diocese. The fact that he is the curator of a million-dollar Shrine adds little to his ecclesiastic stature. Under his management, the Shrine has become more famous as a fountain-head of dubious propaganda than as a place of religious worship, and the pilgrims that it attracts are obviously more interested in seeing Coughlin than in honoring Ste. Thérèse. Practically all the publicity that Coughlin has received

has been of doubtful value to his church. Much of it, in fact, has distinctly handicapped the propagation of the faith.

He has yet to reveal the slightest regard for even the simple amenities of his office. At various times during the past few years he has distinguished himself by publicly tearing off his Roman collar, by suggesting the use of bullets instead of ballots, and by attempting to beat up an inquisitive reporter. His behavior has brought down upon him the disapproval of his bishop and the censure of his Pope. But he continues to hold forth weekly on subjects nicely calculated to arouse more prejudice than piety. With oracular rotundity, he plays Charlie McCarthy to Goebels, and smiles benignly when his performance is cheered by the *Führer's* little agents throughout the land. Although his discourses are his private affair, and not a religious function, he does not hesitate to use the Shrine as a broadcasting studio on Sunday afternoons. On such occasions, he does not permit the members of his congregation to enter. When he goes on the air, only those immediately connected with the program are allowed to remain in his presence.

Coughlin's associates are fond of pointing out that he says Mass,

hears confessions, and visits his parishioners as if he were just an ordinary priest. They seem rather astonished that he is able to manage his pastoral affairs when he has so many other pressing matters to attend to. Actually his priestly tasks are something less than difficult, for in looking after his tiny flock he has the help of three assistants. In summer, of course, he has to entertain the pilgrims, but the rest of the year the Shrine is virtually deserted, and Coughlin never has any trouble finding time for his extra-curricular activities. He conducts his private enterprises from a bleak, inelegant office in the basement of the Shrine, to which only his employees have easy access. At the moment, his staff consists of 105 young women who handle his correspondence and prepare the bales of propaganda with which he floods the country. Despite the fact that Coughlin's radio audience nowadays is less than half as large as it was in 1934, when he had an estimated following of 10,000,000 people, the girls on his payroll are kept very busy. Ever since he became openly anti-semitic last fall, Coughlin has been inundated with mail.

Coughlin never underestimates his own importance. In ordinary

conversation, he speaks of various Senators as if they were his personal delegates to the Congress of the United States, and freely prognosticates the defeat of any proposed legislation of which he does not approve. He makes a point of being solemnly secretive about his financial advisers. They are so highly situated, he hints darkly, that it would create a sensation if he were to divulge their names. He loves to appear mysterious. He delights in hidden documents and apocrypha of all descriptions. A few years ago, he compared Bernard Mannes Baruch with a prince called Manasses who had, he said, dismembered Isaiah. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, the story that Isaiah was cut in half by Manasses is wholly legendary and quite probably a myth. Coughlin, however, related the story as if it were undisputed history, and insisted that Baruch's middle name was Manasses no matter what anyone said to the contrary. At the time of this attack, Coughlin listed Mr. Baruch, along with Eddie Cantor, as the most dangerous Jews in the United States. Lately he has transferred that anathema to Kuhn, Loeb and Company of New York City, which he suspects of having helped to finance the Russian Revolution. Coughlin al-

ways describes the victims of his anathemas as "anti-God." He assumes the prerogatives of the deity with all the confidence but none of the dignity of Father Divine, the wizard of Harlem.

When he first announced that Kuhn, Loeb had lent money to the Bolsheviks, Coughlin boasted that his information was derived from a White Paper of the British Government which he had in his possession. This caused quite a stir, but when Coughlin was asked to produce his White Paper, he admitted that he didn't have it after all. He claimed, however, that his charges against the old American firm were substantiated in a report of the American Secret Service. The Secret Service department promptly denied the existence of any such report. Thereupon Coughlin finally broke down and confessed that his information had come from a Father Dennis Fahey of Dublin, the author of a book called *The Mystical Body of Christ in the Modern World*. A hysterical anti-semite, whose prose style combines the more esoteric features of Oswald Spengler and Julius Streicher, Fahey was a very obscure character until Coughlin promoted him into an authority on world affairs. On this occasion, though, Fahey wasn't much help

to his barker, for it turned out later that the famous White Paper, as identified in *The Mystical Body*, contained no reference whatever to Kuhn, Loeb. The putative sources of Coughlin's radio material have a habit of drying up in this fashion. But although his carelessness with facts sometimes betrays him into outright slander, he never voluntarily retracts any of his statements.

II

For a man with such a peculiar talent for invective, Coughlin is amazingly subdued when you meet him in his office at the Shrine. In private he speaks in an amiable baritone that contains no hint of the fantastic brogue that he affects on the air. His manner is bland but guarded, and he is a master of conversational nonsequitur. When in a recent interview with the writer, he was asked how his theory of "production for use with a profit" differed from the ordinary capitalist concept of production for profit, he suggested that if the word "consumption" were substituted for the word "use," the difference between the system of "Christian capitalism," which he advocates, and ordinary "atheistic capitalism," which he deplors, would become immedi-

ately apparent. Before the obscure matter could be discussed any further, he proceeded to describe one of his favorite methods of restoring prosperity. "If the government will stop issuing non-negotiable, interest-bearing bonds," he said, "and start distributing negotiable, non-interest bearing bonds, this depression will be licked. With negotiable, non-interest bearing bonds, everybody will be able to make a little money, and that will go a long way toward solving our economic problems. Why, if every man bought just one shirt, and every housewife just one sheet, we wouldn't have to worry about the cotton surplus. And God knows we can all stand another shirt."

Coughlin is similarly anxious to dodge any inquiry into his anti-semitism. His response to any question about it is the following garbled concoction: "I do not dislike the Jews. I dislike the communists. There is really no anti-semitic problem in the United States. But there is a semitic problem. I believe that the Jews should have their full rights as a minority."

Coughlin is sleek and stocky, with fat, pink jowls and a formidable double chin. Although he used to be quite an athlete, he hasn't taken much exercise in recent years, and today at 47 he carries a

comfortable little paunch. Despite his bulk, however, he is extremely energetic. He is so anxious to do things in a hurry that he even celebrates Mass in a faster tempo than is customary. His impatience with delays of any kind has frequently got him into some untidy squabbles. A couple of years ago, for instance, he decided to buy a triangular plot of land opposite the Shrine. He succeeded in taking over all but one corner. The owner of the corner had a profitable gas station on his property, and was rather reluctant to make a sale. He wasn't coaxed. Without pausing to dicker, the Father proceeded to build a gas station of his own as close to the other as he could legally get. Today the two establishments are still sitting side by side, and the original gas station, despite cloudy rumors that the proprietor preaches communism, continues to provide plenty of opposition for Coughlin's Super-Shrine Service. A good many of the citizens of Royal Oak are glad to help Coughlin's rival. In his own bailiwick, the Father is none too popular, and even some of the Catholics in his parish take delight in describing him as "The Mad Monk of the Shrine of the Silver Dollar."

Nobody knows very much about

Coughlin's financial arrangements, and he has made quite certain that nobody ever will. He operates through a kind of holding company known as "The Social Justice Poor Society," which, as a charitable organization, is not required to publish any statements. The Society includes no troublesome stockholders and is managed by Coughlin and a couple of his secretaries, who are officially designated as trustees. While he refuses to discuss the actual resources of his Poor Society, he is not only willing but eager to talk about the expenses that he incurs throughout the year. He is proud of the fact that he is able to spend \$1200 a week to take care of his Shrine and ten times that amount to put one "Golden Hour of the Little Flower" on a radio network of forty-six stations. "I like to spend money," he says. "It increases production and consumption. I spend enough of it, God knows, and I hope to keep on spending it until I've put millions in circulation." The millions that Coughlin puts in circulation undoubtedly include a number of large donations from those who are interested in seeing his ideas take hold among the masses. Around Detroit it is generally accepted, rightly or wrongly, that his angels include certain local men of wealth.

To date the only tangible product of Coughlin's open-handedness with the money he has collected is the Shrine of the Little Flower. An architectural miscellany, which has frequently been compared to a silo, the Shrine is by no means imposing to look at. Its most distinguishing feature is a cruciform tower, 150 feet high, on which a monster figure of Christ has been carved along with similarly spectacular figures of the Archangels Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael. At night, illuminated by a battery of searchlights, the Tower resembles the tombstone of a Gulliver. Beneath it, the main body of the Shrine huddles disconsolately, looking bleak as a barn. Because Coughlin has failed to attract a steady congregation to his church, the Shrine may well become a diocesan white elephant if he is ever removed from the air.

Without the contributions of his radio audience, Coughlin would obviously have a hard time keeping the Shrine out of bankruptcy. Whether or not this consideration has anything to do with the strange failure of his superiors to remove him from the air is a question that the ecclesiastics of the Detroit diocese, which embraces Royal Oak, have never discussed in secular circles.

III

Coughlin began to broadcast in 1926. Up until then, his career had been uneventful to the point of tedium. The son of the sexton of a church in Hamilton, Ontario, he attended parochial schools, studied under the Basilians at college, and was ordained a priest in 1916. After his ordination, he taught philosophy for a while at a jerkwater college in Texas, and then came north again to act as an assistant priest in Ontario, Detroit, and Kalamazoo. When he first went to Royal Oak, there was no parish there at all, and before he could begin to preach, he had to build a little church. His original Shrine was an insubstantial frame affair with a seating capacity of 800 — more than adequate for a parish that then included only twenty-eight families. The Shrine was barely completed when the Ku Klux Klan, which was flourishing at the time around Royal Oak, touched off a wooden cross one evening in the church yard.

According to an official souvenir booklet distributed at the Shrine, this inspired the Father to take to the air. In prose that is singularly similar to Coughlin's, the booklet relates that "When the fiery cross, kindled by the hand of bigotry, spit out its angry flames within a

few yards of the little shingled church, Father Coughlin said to himself, 'I shall build a cross which they shall not be able to burn.' " Whereupon, the booklet goes on, he announced to his parishioners that he was going to preach against bigotry on the radio. In the light of his present activities, this legend is neatly ironic, but like most legends it isn't precisely true. Coughlin actually went on the air to get money to clear up his parish debts and he was inspired to do so by a Detroit press agent and promoter named Frank Ward.

Coughlin's first program was a children's hour, devoted to a discussion of the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. It was mildly popular until 1930. Then, with the gloom of the Depression setting in all around, Coughlin decided to go to town. Abandoning his catechism, he delivered a series of discourses on the menace of communism. The series was something of a success. It wasn't until he started to talk about the menace of Hooverism, however, that he became a national figure. With feeling against Hoover running high, Coughlin's attacks on him were so triumphantly received that after one discourse on the subject "Hoover Prosperity Breeds Another War," his mail included al-

most a million congratulatory letters. From that time until he made the mistake of trying to elect Lemke in 1936, Coughlin was seldom out of the news. His remarks, however footless, were prominently displayed in the papers, and his ideas, however fatuous, were earnestly discussed. He was compared with Richelieu and Savonarola, and frequently described as the most influential priest in the world. Under the circumstances, it was hardly odd that he should fall into the error of believing himself infallible. What is odd, though, is that the error should still persist, after he has been so often exposed.

Coughlin will go to almost any lengths to avoid admitting that he is wrong. It is not so long ago that Archbishop Edward Mooney of Detroit was compelled to refute Coughlin's charge that the CIO was anti-Catholic. In order to prevent the spread of the priest's misstatement, the Archbishop requested Coughlin to publish his refutation in *Social Justice*, a magazine that the Father founded in 1936 to serve as a medium for his propaganda. Coughlin promptly renounced all connection with the magazine and transferred its ownership from his own name to that of a henchman called Walter Baertschi, a real estate operator from Toledo.

Thereupon *Social Justice* became a secular organ, beyond the pale of the Archbishop's censure, and attacks on the CIO identical with Coughlin's continued to appear in its pages. Nowadays Baertschi is back in Toledo selling real estate, and *Social Justice*, which claims a circulation of 230,000, is controlled by Coughlin's Poor Society. Although Baertschi still thinks that Coughlin's economic notions are fine, he's too busy running an organization of his own these days to devote much time to the Father. Baertschi's organization is known as "Friends and Neighbors, Incorporated," and has as its altruistic aim the abolition of all taxes on real estate.

In his choice of friends and associates, Coughlin has never been particularly discriminating. Back in 1930, he was supported by Harry Jung, one of the founders of the American Alliance, a society of red-baiting patrioteers. A couple of years later, while passing through New York City, he fell in with George LeBlanc, an investment counsellor, and Robert Harriss, a commodity broker, who both seemed anxious to have him act as a spokesman for the revaluation of the dollar and the remonetization of silver. At the time, Coughlin was talking a lot about saving the

country from communism, but was a trifle vague about the means of salvation. Beyond encouraging his followers to remember the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi and to read Pope Leo XIII's encyclical "On the Condition of Labor," he had little definite to recommend. Soon after meeting LeBlanc and Harriss, though, he blossomed out as an expert on monetary reform. His thesis was simple. Said he:

We have inflated our credit dollars beyond all bounds of reason. Instead of having 54,000,000,000 credit dollars outstanding against our gold deposits, we have gone on pyramiding our obligations until the greatest prosperity debt in the history of civilization is confronting us. The only two ways out are revaluation of our gold ounce or repudiation of our debts. One way is Christianity. The other way is Bolshevism.

This sounded fine, and so did his speeches in favor of the remonetization of silver, and his followers proudly hailed him as the greatest authority on finance in the country. Early in 1934, however, the Treasury Department revealed that Amelia Collins, one of Coughlin's secretaries, had been speculating in silver futures. Miss Collins, it turned out, had bought 500,000 ounces of silver with the funds of the Radio League of the Little Flower. Since she was obviously acting as a front for Cough-

lin, the Father's subsequent orations on silver sounded hollow.

IV

From the beginning of his career as a demagog, Coughlin advocated not only monetary reforms but industrial reforms as well. He insisted that every worker was entitled to join a union of his own choosing and to receive a just annual wage. He encouraged industrialists to soften their hearts toward their workers and permit Jesus Christ to act as board chairman at their meetings. He also suggested that they devise some profit-sharing scheme to insure adequate compensation for labor. While acting as a champion of the working class, he saw nothing wrong in refusing to employ union workmen in building his Shrine. He saw nothing wrong, either, in proposing that the government take over the functions of collective bargaining, thus openly admitting that he favored the fascist method of dealing with the problems of labor. Coughlin has always hankered to dabble in union affairs. When the independent union that was eventually to become the United Automobile Workers of America was founded in 1935, he attempted to formulate a program for it. Although his pro-

gram wasn't adopted, he remained on very friendly terms with the headmen of the union, and they frequently dropped in to see him at the Shrine. When Homer Martin, lately deposed president of the UAW, evinced a desire to dicker privately with Henry Ford, it was Coughlin who arranged the meeting through his pal Harry Bennett.

Later on, by releasing to the Dies Committee a stenographic copy of some off-the-record comments made by Martin at a private meeting at the Shrine, Coughlin did his bit to ruin Martin's standing in the UAW. Martin's private comments were to the effect that most of the UAW leaders were communists. By compelling Martin to acknowledge them in public, Coughlin made it virtually impossible for the union leader to get together with fellow union officials. Coughlin's motive in double-crossing Martin was apparently to render the split in the UAW irreparable. He hates everything connected with the CIO, and is anxious to wreck its unions. His current ideas on labor are of the most reactionary brand. In the magazine *Social Justice* he is continually whooping it up for company unions.

Coughlin has never been loyal to anybody but himself. In his personal relationships he is just as op-

portunistic as he is in his political beliefs. Back in 1930, his closest adviser was Representative Louis McFadden of Pennsylvania, who enjoys the unwholesome distinction of having delivered the only anti-semitic address ever heard in the House. Through McFadden he secured most of the facts and figures that he used in his early discourses. He relied on McFadden so completely that he submitted his sermons to the Representative for approval before delivering them over the radio. Then one day in December 1931 McFadden made a speech in the House of Representatives demanding the impeachment of Herbert Hoover, which resulted in his being attacked by every Republican paper in the land. In the midst of the critical bombardment, McFadden requested Coughlin to say a few words in his favor. "I certainly will," Coughlin responded, "just listen to me next Sunday." When McFadden tuned in on the priest a few days later, he heard him say: "Representative McFadden should be expelled from Congress for making such charges against our President." To explain his change of heart, Coughlin advised McFadden that he "wanted to provoke a comeback from the White House." With this lame and absurd excuse for welshing on his

word, Coughlin terminated the friendship. He has behaved in a similar fashion in many other instances. Among his former pals only a few have escaped his betrayal, the most prominent exception being Huey Long, who was assassinated while his friendship with Coughlin was still hot.

When Huey Long was alive, Coughlin often made common cause with him. For awhile, they had something approaching a Detroit-New Orleans axis, the power of which was demonstrated when they inspired 400,000 people to send telegrams to Washington protesting the World Court bill. In their fight against the United States' entry into the World Court, Long and Coughlin were assisted by William Randolph Hearst. The publisher has always been on cordial terms with the priest, and has on occasion entertained him at San Simeon. After Long's death, Coughlin fell in briefly with the Reverend Gerald Smith, Long's self-styled successor, but their association didn't last very long. Neither of the holy men had much use for the other, and today Coughlin's manner becomes rather strained when any inquiries are made about his collaboration with Smith. Ordinarily Coughlin speaks with unctuous kindness about

practically everybody. His description of Franklin Roosevelt as a man with "an honest heart" is identical with his description of Huey Long. Today, of course, Coughlin considers Roosevelt, his former hero, virtually a communist, while he considers Long an example of the "true democrat." "Huey Long," the Father says, "really had the welfare of the people at heart. He was not a political scalawag and by no means a fascist, potential or otherwise. The tempo of events called for a strong man. His death was most untimely."

V

Compared with Long, Coughlin is a political pipsqueak. Whereas Long, with his "Share the Wealth" clubs, was astute enough to introduce into the United States a brand of demagoguery ostensibly free from any alien taint, Coughlin has made his pulpit the sounding board for ideas openly imported from Germany. Instead of waiting to consolidate his position as a pseudo-radical, the Father has flopped heavily into the diametrically opposite camp. He has thus disqualified himself to play with any degree of plausibility the role of the savior of downtrodden labor. Although he still rants endlessly about "Social

Justice," he has pursued such an opportunistic course that he has baffled even the blindest of his followers. Today those followers are concentrated in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, where they excite a degree of attention out of all proportion to their numbers by noisily picketing radio stations that bar the Father's sermons, and indulging in the cruder forms of Jew-baiting. Too scattered to mean much at elections, they manage to put the heat on Congress by showering legislators with letters and telegrams whenever Coughlin gives the signal. The synthetic character of that pressure, however, is making it less and less effective.

Coughlin's following, which used to include a great many Protestants and Jews in his earlier money-reform incarnation, is today overwhelmingly Catholic. The applause he receives from Fritz Kuhn's Bund is not worth much, since its membership is extremely small. The loud approbation of Adolf Hitler's anti-Catholic press for the Royal Oak preacher is one of the curiosities of the Father's scrambled politics. That Coughlin should be permitted by his spiritual superiors to exploit his connection with the Roman Catholic Church to attract an audience for his

evangelism of intolerance is not easy to understand. In a land where feelings against religious minorities have usually taken the form of anti-Catholicism, a priest in the role of preacher of intolerance toward any minority is surpassingly strange. It is an open question whether he has the right to intimate, as he consistently does, that his Church endorses his doctrines. From the point of view of Catholics who deplore his activities, it is regrettable, to put it mildly, that he should be able to boast that his bishop, with his *imprimatur*, authorizes everything he says.

Coughlin is a man that nobody can trust. He is a dangerous friend and a scurrilous enemy. Politically

unpredictable, he has held his followers during the Depression by supplying them with various scapegoats for their misery and discontent. Although his influence is waning, a recurrence of the conditions of 1932 would undoubtedly restore a great deal of his popularity. But whatever happens, he will never become the Messiah of the *lumpenproletariat*, which is his devout ambition. On his record, he is a political incompetent, who will never be anything more than the advance man for a shrewd and capable mob leader. Meanwhile, he is a rather pathetic creature, suffering from delusions of grandeur and demonstrating somewhat sadly "the effect of unlimited power on limited minds."



COLLECTIVE SECURITY

BY THOMAS JEFFERSON

I sincerely join in abjuring all political connection with every foreign power; and though I cordially wish well to the progress of liberty in all nations, and would forever give it the weight of our countenance, yet they are not to be touched without contamination from their other bad principles.

PIONEER'S RETURN

BY ADELAIDE WALKER

IT IS curious. I grew up in the West, where physical daring and moral independence are proverbial. I came from what historians euphemistically describe as "sturdy pioneer stock." But my parents did their best to make a coward of me. I never learned anything important when I was a child. I never learned to ice-skate or climb ladders or risk bruised knees. Safety was my mother's watchword; to be careful, to take no chances, to cling to security and comfort, and to ignore — by not even recognizing their existence — any larger issue, aim, or conflict. Everything that was routine and petty was of major importance, and the serious questions of life simply did not exist for her at all.

Though I blamed my mother for years, I know now that she could not have acted differently, for all this was not accidental with her. She had learned it from her father, my grandfather. And with him too it was no unique personal trait, but an organic thing which he had learned in the cruel blind alley

where the historical necessity of his time and class had led him. For my grandfather was a pioneer.

Pioneer! The name suggests a glamorous saga in our national tradition. The movies, following the lead of our serious historians, are merely the latest chroniclers to glorify it. In one man's lifetime, half a continent conquered for civilization! Historians remind us that it took man in Europe a thousand years to make the jump which our West made in seventy-five. A man who went west in a covered wagon to lands inhabited by Sioux and Arapahoe could fly back before he died in an airliner. But he paid. Paid by giving every ounce of physical and psychic strength to make this phenomenal feat possible. And his moral and emotional deficit is also part of the pioneer heritage.

It has never been an easy thing for men to uproot themselves from the homes of their fathers and go forth into the wilderness. But in other times men have been content

to transplant civilization slowly. To clear the land and build a home was enough for one generation. To the post-Civil War pioneer, this was not enough. He was born into the great age of expanding American capitalism. To the herculean effort of making a wilderness habitable, he must add the consuming passion of his age and class — to grow rich.

Physically he did the job. The West got the fruits of American industrial civilization as rapidly and completely as the older, settled parts of the country. But civilization is an organic process. It can't be installed like an oil burner or a chromium showerbath. There was no time for creating, or even for an awareness of the values that begin where showerbaths and airplanes stop. No time for anything beyond what the pioneer had gone west to find — success and fortune. The successful ones did not pause, or relax, or look back. Those who did, missed the prize.

My grandfather did not miss. He went west from Maine to Wyoming and Colorado, driving an ox-team and hunting buffalo. From buffalo, he turned to cattle raising — he never had any use for mining and the wealth men took from inside the earth. Perhaps this was the uncorroded core of stern New

England ethics he brought with him from Maine — a vague feeling that anything quite so dependent on chance was fundamentally immoral. At all events, with heroic sacrifice, amid incredible hardships, and with insistence on the traditional virtues of hard work and honesty, he built a fortune of several million dollars.

II

My grandmother was a match for him. She gave birth to her first children — twin girls, one of them my mother — when my grandfather had gone on a round-up and she was alone with a 15-year-old girl, forty miles from the nearest town. When the twins were 4 and the next child 2, the whole family had such a narrow escape from the Indians that they were reported dead and funeral services were held for them in the frontier settlement. Through the long years that followed she endured, with a fortitude in no way second to his own, the vicissitudes and hardships of her husband's struggle.

And in this struggle comfort and security came to be their gods, the only things worth striving for. Unlike their New England ancestors, they had no ideal into which they could sublimate their

effort. Though both of them were pious enough, God had lost all living importance for their generation. They struck no roots into the soil. They built no community. They moved from one house to another, from town to ranch and back to town again. Finally they built a Victorian mansion as visible evidence of their hard-won success, but so little did it really mean as home that in their old age they calmly uprooted themselves from their life of half a century and moved to the city a hundred and fifty miles away. Many of their contemporaries moved to California at this point, and my grandmother sometimes regretted that they had not. But my grandfather could not bring himself to retire completely.

The organic group life of the early New England towns had no counterpart in the settling of the West. There was little feeling of civic responsibility, or interdependence, or of building for permanence and posterity. Before the crudity of pioneer life had really passed, the uprooting, disintegrating forces of industrialism were upon them. From the New England of their childhood, they brought the customs, the morality, the prejudices, and the religion they had known there, but since a

culture cannot be transplanted in its entirety, these became mere empty forms, into which they were unable to pour life or content. Under the glamour and excitement of the pioneer tradition lay a great void without reason or meaning. This became fully apparent in my mother's generation. For them culture was a pseudo-synthetic product, kept in the parlor like a bouquet of paper flowers — just as good as the real thing and much more practical. . . .

So there were my grandparents after a lifetime of heroic sacrifice, and no trace of ease, or grace, or beauty, and nothing to justify what they had suffered but a couple of million dollars. What could they do but make for their children a philosophy to fit? If a man has sacrificed all the good and pleasant things of life in order to worship God as he pleases, or to free the human spirit from political and economic bondage, he can face his children proudly and confidently; he can give them a heritage of struggle and human dignity, and the courage to ignore life's petty worries and selfish obsessions. But if he has sacrificed every human value and every possession of the spirit for money which he is then too old and worn out to spend — or even to remember how he

once longed to spend — he can only pass on to his children the cautious emptiness of his own bleak spirit. He teaches them to take no chances, to be careful, to eat good meals and sit by a warm fire and hold on to what they have — though he makes them too stupid in the process to do even that.

Such poverty of spirit, I honestly believe, has never existed anywhere in the world. Life without roots, without a past or a future — the pioneering bourgeoisie was overtaken by its own decay before it had a chance to flower into maturity, was blighted at the start by its own lack of aim or dream to carry it forward.

You can tell what they were like by their houses. Never have men built for themselves houses of such unbearable ugliness. The poorest peasant, the humblest fisherman has some touch of beauty and grace in the place where he lives and raises his children. But in the building of the West, the rancher, the businessman, and the millionaire alike made for themselves homes so lacking in any touch of humanity that after a few years they themselves could no longer endure them and they moved on — if they could — to others newer and even uglier.

III

My grandfather died when I was 14, worn out with his pioneering and money-making and without ever having used his money for anything. He had never had fun with it, nor used it for power and prestige, nor “done good” — outside a stern and measured generosity to a periphery of indigent relatives. Stern and measured, not because he was stingy, but because he made a fetish of self-reliance and independence and believed that too much help would destroy these supremely important qualities. He and my grandmother never even took that European, or round-the-world, tour which their best friends — the other richest family in town — had had, and which my grandparents continued to promise themselves up to the day of their deaths.

So in the end the only thing my grandfather did with his money — for which he had frozen and starved and gone forth into the wilderness away from all that was civilized and pleasant — was leave it to his children.

His children by this time were as little fitted to cope with their fortune as if they had won it in a lottery. My grandfather had built them each a house and started his

son and sons-in-law in business — his own, the cattle business — for which none of them had any particular inclination or talent. He believed that young people should “make their own way in the world” as he had done — work hard and live meagrely. They were all dutiful about it and accepted it as the natural order of things (except his daughter-in-law, who was frankly bored at having married a rich man’s son only to live like a poor man’s wife).

But their hard work and meagre living did not bring the results my grandfather had so obviously expected; none of them became millionaires. Perhaps it was knowing that in any real emergency or illness there were, after all, several million dollars available that kept them from making that last ounce of effort that enabled my grandfather to grow rich.

Whatever it was, they lived for fifteen or sixteen years modest, middle-class lives on \$3000 or \$4000 a year. Their constant training in being “practical” and “economical,” and their carefully nurtured lack of courage and initiative (despite my grandfather’s lip service to self-reliance and independence), had fitted them very well for this existence. Since facing the fact that they would some day be

rich would have meant facing the fact that this pleasant state would occur only through the death of their father — filial duty, and perhaps an unconscious fear that they might seem, even to themselves, to be wishing it — prevented their giving any thought to their future inheritance.

Everything might have been all right had my grandfather died fifteen years before, or had his children inherited a stable, steadily profitable business instead of a vast, disorganized, widely scattered mass of cattle, land, and real estate. To my grandfather investment meant something tangible, something he could *see* and *manage*; he distrusted stocks and bonds, and his surplus had gone into a fantastic collection of decrepit office buildings and inaccessible flour mills. Furthermore, my parents came into their inheritance at the moment when agriculture and real estate were tobogganing into the post-war slump where they stayed for the most part through the “prosperity” of the late ’twenties.

Bewildered by their new wealth and the crisis which engulfed it, and utterly unprepared for both, all my grandfather’s children tried desperately to do the right thing. They hired lawyers and formed family corporations and were al-

ways very polite to each other about the gigantic sums which they proceeded to lose. There were no sordid family quarrels and no recriminations, but the money which had been accumulated in fifty years of heart-breaking effort dwindled away in ten years of agrarian slump and impotent mismanagement.

When my grandmother died — ten years after my grandfather — there was no money left. For the whole ten years my parents and aunts and uncles had worked and worried; they had denied themselves even the satisfaction of squandering their money pleasantly. The second generation, like the first, had got nothing from the

money which had cost them, as well as their parents, the sacrifice of everything worthwhile in life.

I was the only one who really profited from grandfather's money. While his children stood around bewildered and the rest of the grandchildren were too young to care, I had made up my mind what I wanted. I wanted to get away. Away from my family, from the West, from the bleak Wyoming town and everything that all of them stood for. The remnants of my grandfather's hard-earned fortune lasted just long enough to enable me to settle, permanently though humbly, in the New England he had left sixty years before.



POET TO PATRON

BY LANGSTON HUGHES

WHAT right has anyone to say
That I
Must throw out pieces of my heart
For pay?

For bread that helps to make
My heart beat true,
I must sell myself
To you?

A factory shift's better,
A week's meagre pay,
Than a perfumed note asking:
What poems today?

► *If war comes this year — how will it end?
An American military expert explains why*

GERMANY CAN'T WIN!

BY GEORGE FIELDING ELIOT

WE are being frightened out of our wits by the spectacle of a rearmed and mighty Germany, already invincible, which is today the master of Europe, and tomorrow may be the master of the world. We are being told that we must make haste to throw in our lot with the "democracies" of Europe, otherwise they will soon be overwhelmed by Germany and her Italian satellite, after which our own turn will come. We are even told that Germany may conquer Britain and come into possession of the British Navy — as wild a flight of fancy as this hysterical period has provoked. The warning is shaping into a formula: "We must help the democracies of Europe now, or later we shall face a victorious Germany alone." The German victory is taken for granted.

It is important, therefore, to examine calmly and coolly the actual military position of Germany today, and what we may expect that position to be in the immediate future. To begin with, let's look at the German Army:

This is not the Imperial Army of 1914, by a long shot. That army had been steadily building its strength since 1871. Every year a fresh class of conscripts had been called up, trained for two or three years, and had the cream skimmed off it to form the non-commissioned-officers *cadre*. Every year a fresh class of carefully selected cadets had gone into the officers' schools. Every year the young university men had joined up as "one-year volunteers" to be trained in special courses as reserve officers. In forty-three unbroken years of this process, a military machine had been forged which had no equal in the world, all things considered.

The army was organized in 25 corps (50 divisions) of first-line troops, plus 11 cavalry divisions. Behind these, on mobilization in 1914, 48 reserve divisions and 7 *Ersatz* divisions were called up, and there were still available for secondary uses *Landwehr* (second reserve) troops equivalent to 16 divisions. This grand total of 121 divisions and 11 cavalry divi-

sions was armed, accoutered, and equipped down to the last detail, and every unit had a complete complement of fully trained officers and non-commissioned officers. The officer corps had an *esprit* and cohesion unmatched anywhere; the General Staff, the directing brain of the whole vast machine, had been developing its tactical and strategical doctrines for half a century, and had fully matured plans to meet every emergency.

The French army was probably as good as the German in quality, certainly as good as far as the officer corps went, but inferior in numbers. The Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Italian armies, for varying reasons, could not be compared with the German. The British and ourselves still clung to the old principle of a small volunteer professional army. The German army, in short, was pre-eminent in Europe.

What is this army like today? In the first place, we must take into account the "Versailles gap" from 1919 to 1934, during which period there was no compulsory military training. Germany was, in those 15 years, constrained by the disarmament clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, which limited her army to a force of 4000 officers and 100,000 men; the former were

required to engage for 20 years and could be replaced only at a very small annual rate; the latter were professional soldiers enlisted for a 12-year term, and likewise limited as to replacements. This force — the famous *Reichswehr* — was, it is true, brought to a very high degree of efficiency by the brilliant and versatile General von Seeckt, but it was further handicapped by being denied tanks and heavy artillery, and by the demilitarization of the Rhineland.

In 1935, when Hitler decided upon open rearmament, more or less secret measures had already been taken to increase Germany's forces. The State Police had been given military training, and was almost as efficient as the *Reichswehr*, though without artillery. A certain number of young men had received special courses. A frontier guard had been formed and trained to some extent. Some military training had been given to such civilian formations as the SS (blackshirts) and SA (brown shirts). But when all was said and done these measures did not give Germany a larger field force. They provided the *Reichswehr* with a reservoir of trained or partially trained replacements, and they provided units capable of performing the duties of internal police and to

some extent of garrisoning fortified places — and that is all.

With the issuance of the military laws of 1935, the picture began to change. Compulsory and universal military service for a period of two years was reintroduced for all German males physically fit, beginning at the age of 20, as in the old Imperial army; and the subsequent service in reserve, *Landwehr*, and *Landsturm* was likewise decreed, the annual classes of conscripts being called up each October. At the same time, the resumption of officer-training in cadet schools was arranged for, and the training of non-commissioned officers and reserve officers as well. These methods were supplemented by arrangements for training selected men from the "lost classes" (those who would have been called in the period 1919-1934 under normal conditions) at the rate of about 50,000 per year, in courses of eight weeks' duration. Many former officers were called to the colors, and the highly trained men of the *Reichswehr* were in many instances advanced to officers' rank after intensive periods of instruction, or became non-commissioned officers. When the second class of conscripts was called up in October 1936 it was found possible to constitute the army on the basis of 36 first-line

divisions, 3 mechanized divisions, and a cavalry brigade. In East Prussia an additional class was called to the colors each year.

In 1937, the first fully trained class of reservists was dismissed from the army to their homes, and another in 1938. Today, Germany has with the colors the classes called up in 1937 and 1938, plus about 250,000 of the permanent-instruction *cadre*: a total of 850,000 men. The trained reserves (two classes) total 650,000, to which may be added perhaps 200,000 who have received the eight weeks' courses, and 50,000 additional fully trained reservists for East Prussia. The grand total is 1,750,000; and behind this is a large replacement reservoir of partially trained men of various categories. To this again must be added the trained units of the Austrian army, insofar as these can be usefully employed.

The organization is in 18 corps, of 2, 3, or 4 divisions each. Total: 49 divisions, 3 mountain divisions, 3 or 4 mechanized divisions, 3 cavalry divisions (with 2 more probably in course of organization). These are first-line units. There are 38 reserve divisions, which were seriously handicapped until a short time ago by a shortage of artillery; this has now been made up by the

capture of the whole *materiel* of the Czechoslovak army, sufficient for at least 34 divisions. It will, however, take a little time for this unfamiliar *materiel* to be absorbed into the German organization. *Landwehr* divisions exist on paper, but are hardly yet effective units.

Germany can therefore put into the field a total of 90 divisions, plus mechanized and cavalry divisions, as against 121 in 1914.

II

There is a very great difference in the effectiveness of the 1939 army and that of 1914, however. The great cohesive element of the latter force, the officer corps, does not exist in the same sense at all. The present officer corps consists of four elements, different in original composition and in military, political, and social outlook: (1) the professional officers of the old *Reichswehr*; (2) the reserve officers and former officers called back to service in 1935 after long periods of civil employment; (3) the former enlisted men of the *Reichswehr*; (4) the new young officers who have come through the cadet schools since 1935. It will take some years to shake down this heterogeneous aggregation into any uniformity of thought and doctrine.

Moreover, as to numbers there is a very severe shortage, as there is with the non-commissioned officers. It is possible in a few months, or perhaps a year or two, to train a private soldier in his duties; it is less possible to create an efficient non-commissioned officer in this length of time. To train an officer is quite out of the question in anything like the time which has been available to Germany. The shortage of leaders is the most serious handicap facing the German army today. This is a defect, of course, which time will cure.

Today one may confidently state that the German army could not fight the French, single-handed, with any genuine hope of success. With every year that passes, the conditions are likely to alter in favor of Germany, as her military machine improves, enlarges, gains experience and training. The French army will grow no larger, nor improve its efficiency. It cannot. It is already as large and as good as it can be made on France's stationary population of 40,000,000; while as Germany's army becomes more proportionate to her present population (Czechs excluded) of 78,000,000, it will eventually far overshadow that of France in size (even including the French colonial troops) while it

will slowly ascend the comparative scale of quality, in which it is today so inferior. But that is in the future. Our hypothesis supposes a war now, this year; and today it is the French army, not the German, which is pre-eminent in Europe. Panic-talk has obscured this fact, yet it remains a towering fact.

The German navy, when ships now building are completed, will have 4 or 5 battleships, 3 "pocket battleships," 15 cruisers, 2 aircraft carriers, a strong flotilla of destroyers and torpedo boats, and close to 100 submarines. Except in the last category, it will be distinctly inferior to the French navy, and considerably less than one-third the size of the British. In 1914 Germany's navy ranked second in the world; today it ranks fifth.

Its purpose, however, is plain from the qualities of its ships, even without the evidence of the recent move to the Spanish coast. The Germans learned in the last war that an inferior navy locked up in the North Sea and the Baltic is of little use as an offensive weapon of war. They mean this time to use their fleet on the British trade routes, the one effective employment found for it in the last war. How effective this employment will be depends on how quickly the British and French fleets can

run down the German raiders, and how quickly the British and French armies can dispose of the Spanish and African bases which will support these raiders.

That a serious menace is here presented to Britain is unquestionable. But that this menace can be decisive is highly questionable. The stronger the German grip on Spain becomes, the more African possessions Germany can acquire, the greater the danger from her commerce-raiding operations, to which Britain proved so vulnerable in the last war. The swarms of submarines will compel the conveying of merchant shipping, and the fast capital ships and cruisers will attack the convoys themselves. Here again, we must say that Germany cannot win today, but that time is working inexorably in Germany's favor, increasing the number of ships available, increasing also her moral authority in Spain and allowing her to tighten her grip on Spanish Africa.

It should be added that the German navy seems to be the most efficient of her three armed forces; here there has been no compromise with training requirements for officers and petty officers, as there has been in the army and air force. The growth has been slower, but the results more certain.

In her preponderant air force Germany today possesses her principal military asset. German air superiority rests upon three supports: a superior number of first-line airplanes (4000 in operating squadrons, 4000 in reserve, as against a total of about 4000 for Britain and 2000 for France); far superior facilities for replacement of planes (a wartime capacity of 1000 or more airplanes a month, as against 400 for Britain and 120 for France); and superior numbers of trained personnel, both flying and ground. It must be noted that the German manufacturing capacity will not greatly increase, while that of Britain is expected to reach 600 a month by the end of this year, and that of France 250 to 300. Besides, in the long run these countries can count on American airplane manufacture to supplement their own. Here is one factor in which time is not working for Germany. Against this must be set the circumstance that Germany's position in respect to raw materials and fuel, at present the principal air shortages, may be strengthened. Unless the eastern cordon (Poland-Rumania) can be closed and kept closed — and the German economic agreement with Rumania does not indicate it — the Reich will be able to develop

new sources of supply to make up this shortage in great part.

There is one other most significant consideration to be taken into account: the fact that it is not likely that air power alone can win a decision in modern war. Unable to defeat France on land, or Britain at sea, Germany is reduced to the hope of using her air force to win her victory. She can do this only by striking with full force at the British Isles, the principal prop of the alliance forming against her. Can the German air force bomb the British people into submission in a few days or weeks? On the available evidence — admittedly incomplete — of Spain and China, it cannot. The city of London is woefully vulnerable, but its defenses have greatly improved since Munich. The British people are tough-fibered and can take a great deal of pounding. If the attempt is made and fails, it will have cost Germany the greater part of her air force, and will leave her in difficulties indeed.

Finally, there is the economic front, and here a word of caution is needed. It has been the fashion to say that Germany cannot stand the strain of war. Perhaps not; but the same thing was said of Japan two years ago and of Italy at the outset of the Ethiopian

adventure. As a matter of fact, as far as finances and food are concerned, there is almost no limit to the resisting power of a great nation, as Germany demonstrated in 1914-1918, as the Southern Confederacy demonstrated in the 'sixties. The substitution of forced labor for capital is a process which a dictatorial government can carry on almost indefinitely, so long as it is not deprived of essential raw materials without which its war industry cannot function. It is in the latter respect that the Reich is handicapped. The more complex the weapons of war, the greater their requirements for munitions, so much more vulnerable will be the nation which cannot give its industry all the things needful for its demands. And Germany is seriously deficient, notably in copper, cotton, iron, manganese, nickel, petroleum, and tin. For some, more or less satisfactory substitutes can be found; for others, not.

The moral factors are less easily weighed. Undoubtedly the German people do not want war; undoubtedly one of the principal props of Hitler's prestige at home is that he has achieved so much without war. That he has been able to do so is largely owing to the threat of his air force, acting as an instrument of international black-

mail, overshadowing Europe and particularly England. He should be the last man to wish to put this untried weapon (in the larger sense) to a test it might fail.

III

Sum it all up, and it comes to this: *Germany cannot win a war if one begins today, tomorrow, this year.* The general assumption, based at least in part on wishful thinking, is that time works against Germany, and in favor of the democracies. As the writer has already indicated, he does not believe this. On the contrary, give Germany more time, let her extend her suzerainty over more territory, let the terror of her unchecked advance overawe a few more small powers, and the military balance changes. The more sources of strategic raw materials she acquires, the less she is vulnerable to blockade. The longer she has to train leaders, the stronger her army becomes. The more ships she puts into commission, the more overseas bases she acquires, the greater the threat of her naval and air power to the British sea-lanes.

The chances of victory in a future war must be viewed from two angles. First, that of Germany on the offensive, seeking to impose her will on others; second, that of

Germany on the defensive, striving to protect her gains and her position in Europe from allied pressure. In the first case, her chances of winning today depend wholly on her air power plus the possible effect of her raids on British commerce. They are not bright. In the second case, she might fight a long defensive war, but in the end would be pretty sure to lose as the British and French empires made their enormous resources effective.

But what of Italy? Here the answer is quite clear. No strutting and bombast can make Italy a great military power. She lacks the very bases for modern military might — coal, iron, copper, and oil. In war she could not import them, being of all the principal European nations the most vulnerable to blockade, locked up in an enclosed sea with both entrances controlled by superior hostile forces. Her fleet is sharply inferior to that of France, or to the British Mediterranean fleet. Her large submarine flotilla cannot help her much; the World War showed how ineffective is the submarine against modern war-fleets, whatever its prowess as a commerce-destroyer. Not a single capital ship of the British Grand Fleet was even torpedoed, much less sunk, by a submarine during four years of operations

in the North Sea. Italy's air force is an untried weapon in this respect. The consensus of informed opinion is that the airplane is not likely to be a decisive means of dealing with the battleship. Both these weapons can inflict serious injuries on capital ships under certain circumstances, but they cannot open up the exits from the Mediterranean in the face of superior surface forces. On land, the configuration of the Franco-Italian frontier is favorable to invasion of Italy from France, highly unfavorable to the reverse; nor does any informed observer suppose that the Italians could make a successful stand against the French either here or in North Africa. Indeed, the whole Anglo-French plan of campaign would appear to begin with a tremendous assault, by land and sea, upon weak and vulnerable Italy to eliminate her at once from the struggle. This probably means that, though Italy might gain Germany a little time, in the end she would be a source of weakness rather than strength, demanding aid rather than giving it. Spain might be more useful because of her strategic position and her possession of a war-hardened, stout-fighting army. But she has been terribly weakened by two and a half years of civil war, and to-

day is far from being a united nation.

On the other hand, Poland is a sturdy and well-armed ally for France and Britain. Her army of 30 divisions is composed of good material, and is well-armed, though there is a shortage of some types of modern equipment for reserves. Certainly she could be counted on to take care of a German force at least equal to her own. Rumania, whose army is not considered equal to Poland's in quality, has a much more defensible frontier and is by no means to be disregarded. Behind these two powers lies Soviet Russia, "the enigma of the East." The continuous purges among the higher-ranking officers make it doubtful whether the Russian army could take the offensive in the west; nor does the Soviet fleet seem a formidable fighting force. But at the worst, Soviet support could give Poland and Rumania the one military asset they most greatly need — an air force — and could be an inexhaustible source of munitions and supplies. At this writing, of course, after the removal of Commissar of Foreign Affairs Litvinoff, Russia's role in the event of war is most unclear.

These are the present conditions. Germany cannot win — now. But Germany next year or the year after, may be a very different Germany.

Certainly we in the United States have little reason to fear either Germany's present power, or any offensive by a Germany weakened and drained by the strain of war even though she might be victorious. Either way, we are in little danger while we maintain an adequate level of naval power, backed by a sufficient army and air force. Certainly, also, at the present time, our British and French friends are quite capable of taking care of their own interests if they have the will to do so. The one chance Germany would have to win a European war — a swift all-out attack by her air force on Great Britain — is precisely the one form of attack which we Americans could not possibly arrive in time to help repel. Short of such an attack, the resources of Britain and France are ample to insure them success. It is well for us to think over these practical considerations at this time.

GHOST GOES TO COLLEGE

BY ROY A. BENJAMIN, JR.

NOWADAYS, if a college sophomore has a 5000-word essay due on "The Banking System of the Pharaohs," or if a graduate student is worried over his Ph.D. thesis, there are two possible solutions: the victim can do the work himself, or he can delegate the job to G. H. Smith. More and more students are choosing the second course. When the parchments and letters are distributed this month, a good many will bear traces of the expert collaboration of the said Mr. Smith. (Smith is the ghost's perfectly selected pseudonym.)

As king of college ghost writers, Smith has put his business on such a mass-production basis that his far-from-ghostly earnings come to \$10,000 a year. This year, his clientele included over 600 men and women in colleges and universities throughout the country. For them Smith did themes, essays, and book reports. He employs a smooth-working staff of six writing assistants and six typists. An M.A. himself, but no Ph.D., Smith has prepared ten Ph.D. and sixty

M.A. theses — at a price. He also caters to such deans, principals, and professors as need help on lectures or learned articles.

Smith operates in a little apartment-office on West 121st Street, in New York City, one block from Columbia University. He's been there since 1933 — an amazing little man with a devastating self-confidence and a mind, developed by the far-reaching nature of his business, that gallops the gamut of knowledge from algebra to zoology. There's precious little Smith doesn't know, and absolutely nothing that stumps him. In his apartment, surrounded by six typewriters and 2000 books, he does his ghosting, attired in a yellow polo shirt, a beltless pair of corduroy trousers, and house slippers. A 120-pounder, he has a stringy little mustache, eager, darting eyes, wide-rimmed glasses, and floppy hair. At 31, he still looks like a student.

Smith gets his clients by canvassing campuses with a form-letter headed "Every Man Today Has a Ghost," which says:

Having complete bibliographical guides, great experience, and valuable clippings and research at my disposal, I can often compile an essay in two days that would cause any other person many weeks of fret and care.

A list of his "fields of work" quickly convinces the prospect that no subject can be assigned that Smith the Ghost does not know. At random, the "fields" cover finance, classical civilization, music, anthropology, religion, military and naval science, foreign languages, world politics, and anatomy. But those are just a few.

Smith's letter inevitably wins responses like the following from Princeton:

Dear Mr. Smith:

Would you submit by return mail the price of a 6000 word paper? The subject is "The Supernatural Elements in Beowulf."

Or like this one from the University of Pennsylvania:

Dear Mr. Smith:

Some time ago I received a letter from you stating that you wrote essays. Will you kindly submit the cost of an essay for an elementary course in constitutional law. The subject, covering 5000 words, is on the "Decisions, Philosophy, and Life of Justice Stone of the Supreme Court of the United States." The emphasis must be on interpretations of his decisions.

Smith takes professional pride in giving a new slant to every assign-

ment. He could easily rehash some paper done years before, but that isn't his idea of ghosting cricket. Each assignment brings a different problem.

II

The usual theme, footnoted, with bibliography, and guaranteed for grade and non-detection, costs between \$10 and \$20. Book reports vary from \$3 to \$10, depending on the book. More complicated subjects, demanding more than the usual amount of research and interpretation, may run into pretty big money. Master's and Doctor's theses, of course, bring in the highest fees. A Ph.D. report varies between \$500 and \$700, and will take from 200 to 500 typewritten pages. Master's average about \$300. The Ghost doesn't write these longer assignments quickly. He must live for several months with the job, devoting an hour or so to it daily. One Ph.D. thesis, just completed, required 700 working hours, Smith says, and covered a period of a year and a half. Another recent one was written in 225 actual working hours.

A typical week's work, as revealed by the Ghost's files, would mean delving in such scattered topics as Christianity and Medieval

Art, Sun Spot Cycles, Personal Traits of Competent Secretaries, The Unsupervised Play of Children, the Credit Department in Modern Banking, How to Get a Job, Political Implications of the Berlin to Bagdad Railroad, Law and Order on the American Frontier, What I Hear In Berlioz and Schubert, Building Rhythmic Consciousness, The Character of Jesus, Menus for a Nurse's Dining Room, Growth and Development of the Teeth, and Artificial Respiration.

Smith gives individual attention to each client. He recommends high-lighted chapters of books to be read; he advises better study habits. He invites the student to drop into his office for personal interviews and advice. Vivid testimony to his ghosting genius is the fact that in the thousands of jobs he has done, no student has ever been caught. Once he wrote seven essays on "The Murals of Paolo Veronese" for students in the same class. All seven got by.

Smith writes in six different styles, ranging from "C" to "A". In most cases a "C" student asks for a "C" paper so the professor won't be suspicious at the sudden improvement. As part of his service, though, Smith tries to pull these average pupils up to higher grade levels. Oddly enough the

greater part of his clients are "A" students. "This is because most curricula overload the student," the Ghost explains. "Bright men and women want time for the subjects that interest them the most. Like good business executives, they give tedious assignments to me."

Experience has taught Smith how the Harvard style varies from that of Oklahoma State Teachers. He knows the profs who adore polysyllabic themes and he overflows accordingly for them. He can split an infinitive or hang a participle for a freshman essay. He pounds out bold Anglo-Saxon for the California senior writing on "Giant Redwoods" and he gushes and coos for the Vassar sweet whose assignment is "Social Events in the Colonial Period."

The Ghost is a tremendous reader. He is a Californian who got his B.A. at San Diego Teachers College, then his M.A. at Michigan University, in 1931. Throughout his college years he kept to himself and read voraciously. Classmates called him anti-social, but it was swell training for a ghost. Smith walked out on his Ph.D. after two years' work at Yale. "What does the symbol mean, anyway?" he asks. "At the time I could think rings around most of the Ph.D.'s in the country. Of course I can do

it now." Many times his assigned book reports and necessary research-reading take him into more than a hundred books a week. With characteristic candor, he admits that he is "the best-read man in the country." For extensive and diversified reading the Ghost would be hard to beat.

About his occupation he has this to say: "I am convinced I am aiding the students who use my service. My essays are always thoughtfully worked out and carefully written. If a boy will study them, he will get a lot more out of an assignment than if he had merely waded through old books and copied out meaningless data.

"Many students hardly know what a good essay looks like. Professors as a rule fail to discuss them and do not let students read the essays submitted by other members of the class. My papers stand as models and examples for the students."

Notwithstanding this assertion of nobility, a few educators have kicked. The President of Smith College wrote the Ghost and asked him "as a gentleman" to cut it out, but Smith College girls are still being ghosted. The President of Swarthmore tried to have the New York authorities do something. The best they could do was to

make Smith register his business. He did — as a typewriting agency. Every once in a while a student resents the circular sent to him, and shoots back a nasty note. Smith has a thick pile of these letters carefully filed away under "Vicious Retorts."

Four years from now, when he is 35, Smith plans to give up ghosting for writing of his own. "Most American writers begin too soon," he says. "They don't know enough. They haven't studied or observed enough to be good writers." His first effort will be a book called *The Autobiography of a Ghost*, giving the experience and philosophy gained from his six years' work. He will also include chapters on what he thinks of the educational and collegiate worlds which promise to be revealing.

After the *Autobiography*, he intends to write fiction. With customary immodesty he sees the day when America, and in fact the world, will honor his name as a great writer. His chief worry is what to do with the honors he is sure to get. He still holds to the complex that made him throw over his Ph.D. because of its "mere symbolic" meaning, so he hasn't decided yet whether or not to accept the various prizes and honors that will come his way.

Elliott Roosevelt: THE PRESIDENT'S PROBLEM CHILD

BY HERBERT COREY

WHEN Elliott Roosevelt began to feel his oats, which was about as soon as he began to shape up as the husky, hard-eyed, blondish six-footer he now is, he made a career of beating the engineer to the cross-roads. He was a super-beau for the young ladies available in a reasonable radius. He was a power-diver, a lusty singer of *Sweet Rosie O'Grady* in the wrong pews, and he could pull chairs from beneath unsuspecting guests. He had the big hands and big feet which foretold his future stature and he was looked upon as a clumsy, irresponsible, likeable young hellion. His older brother Jimmy was his father's favorite — suave, well-groomed, with a turn for public speaking and a taste for politics and the society of the well-born. His mother seems to have favored the intractable Elliott.

"He is the Roosevelts' problem child," she said.

She did not say it with a sigh either. If Elliott got home with a whole neck his mother seems to

have been satisfied. Today, at 31, the second son of the President of the United States still has a whole neck despite a propensity for sticking it out. He has been married twice, once divorced, and is the father of three children. He is as full of life as a chuck-a-luck game. His immediate aim is more dollars, but his next move will be for more power. He does not admit this. Asked if he would be a candidate for anything in 1940 — for Governor of Texas, Senator, member of the legislature, anything at all — he replied:

"Three politicians in one family are enough. Four would be too many."

"Who are the three?"

"Dad, and Jimmy, and Mother."

He differs from his paternal progenitor on political and economic grounds. That's for the record. There is no rift. There are times when Elliott registers at the Willard Hotel when in Washington on business. But there are other times when he lives at the White House,

does his telephoning from that august address, and has his business acquaintances call on him there. The choice between hotel and home is not casual.

The American Society of Broadcasters met at Washington on one occasion. Elliott not only wanted to be made a director, but he was boosting a friend for the place of czar. President and Mrs. Roosevelt were not in the city at the time, and Elliott arranged for a state dinner at the White House at which fifty broadcasters were to be his guests. Perhaps not the gold plate, but certainly all the best linen and china, an act or two, and maybe a little Scotch. Elliott likes Scotch. Some of his best friends steered him away from that plan. They pointed out that there were 450 other broadcasters who could not be invited for reasons of space, and would therefore be sore, and that an untrammelled press would rip his innards out if he tried such a trick. Elliott gave up the idea reluctantly. He was not precisely convinced, but he was out-shouted.

It is entirely likely that the President has looked at his offspring's goings-on with tolerance. That seems to be a characteristic of the Roosevelt family. No doubt he likes to see the young fellow get ahead. When FDR moved into the

White House, Elliott found the atmosphere was a bit dank. The young men around the President affected an amused liking for him, which was definitely not reciprocated. Perhaps they thought they might use him in an emergency; but they soon gave up that idea. They were kid-gloved, lastex-ed, and learned — he was none of those things. Life was a very amusing proposition to him at the time. On one occasion he issued invitations to a tea at the White House and then left town. When the social secretaries at the White House learned what had happened they had to cancel the bids, which Elliott thought was good for a big laugh. He was as unpredictable and active as an Airedale pup.

"What'll that damn boy do next?" asked the young men.

II

Elliott did a most surprising thing. He got control of a string of twenty-three radio stations in Texas. They are little ones for the most part — 100 watt-ers — which are as a rule not favored by big advertisers. But Elliott is a go-getter. He did not send his name in to the big advertisers by the office boy, but walked in on them. The son of the President is not to be turned down by any man in big business. He got the

advertising, on which he received a commission on top of his salary, and became a vice-president of the Hearst radio chain. He resigned this somewhat later, but no significance is to be attached to his resignation. Hearst is liquidating his affairs and the radio chain was one of the affairs; the job was washed up in any case. Elliott lost nothing. As a broadcaster in the Southwest he is listened to. People would listen to the son of the President even if he had nothing to say, and Elliott has things to say. He may not be a deep thinker, but he knows on which side of his bread the butter spreads best. In Texas it spreads on the Texas side.

"If I question an Administration program or policy," he once said, "I do so in the spirit that what information I have gleaned in the South may be helpful to the Administration and not in the spirit of hatred, distrust, or of questioning the sincerity of any one."

Before considering Elliott as a partially finished product, the raw material should be more closely examined. An apology seems advisable at this point, for an indelicate phrase is about to be used. Elliott has always been as independent as a hog on ice. Anyone who has ever seen a hog on ice will recall that the beast has no partners in his enter-

prise. He is wholly engrossed in his own affairs, although he may have helpers. Elliott has always resisted authority. He would not go to Groton, which is an extremely fine-haired private school, and his subsequent references to Harvard were regarded as unfortunate by some excellent judges of expression.

His opposition to higher education broke down for a brief period after he won the Groton-Harvard battle, but after six months either the boy or Princeton surrendered. The record is not wholly satisfying. He did not have a liking for low company — this must be emphasized — but some of the company he liked might have been considered low by certain others. Those who have a full set of reverences might find fault with him. On one occasion he is reported to have said of his honored father:

"I don't think the Old Man ever caught a damn fish."

He whooped around after Princeton, held various small-time jobs and had a good time without breaking his neck. So far as outsiders could see he was heading for the showers before he had even got into his uniform. He married the rich, pretty, and charming Elizabeth Donner of Philadelphia, begat a son, and appeared at intervals on the first pages from widely sepa-

rated spots on the map. After his father had been elected President, Anthony Fokker bethought himself that he needed a salesman for his airplanes. Young Mr. Roosevelt knew only those things about airplanes that might be learned by flying in them, but he was given a \$20,000 job, plus a somewhat indeterminate commission on sales. President Roosevelt did not object to his son's venture into business. Elliott said so later on.

But the airplane business was a twitchy one at that time. Postmaster General Farley, acting under instructions, had canceled some mail contracts and young officers of the Army had been killed while trying to fly the mails in the pigeon-coops the Army then used for planes. Congress began to ask questions. Young Mr. Roosevelt denied with heat that he had ever been a lobbyist for the aviation business. Then it was discovered that he planned to go on a selling tour through Europe. Elliott had seen no objection to the idea, but he admitted that his father had put his foot down on it.

One day Elliott got out of an airplane at Fort Worth. In the group gathered to meet him was Miss Ruth Googins, dark-eyed, black-haired, pretty as a peach, filmy in white. She was the daugh-

ter of a well-to-do, not rich, businessman of Texas. There was no doubt about it from the start. They spent as much time together as they could and the vandals of the press wrote things, but the young folks stood pat. The wife in Philadelphia also stood pat. Presently Elliott went to Reno and alleged in legal form that Elizabeth Donner Roosevelt had been "cruel." Then the divorce was granted on her cross-complaint, and Elliott and Ruth were married. Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, being interrogated by the vandals, declined to say that she had given the matter any thought:

"It is their lives they must live," she said. "Not mine."

Elliott's name was dropped from the Social Register, which was of no importance to him. He was more interested in bull and stallion genealogies at this time, for the young Googins-Roosevelts had settled on a 1500 acre ranch in Texas, and Elliott gave his attention to livestock, especially when the photographers were around. There is always someone to call the attention of a young man with a big name to some promising prospect, however, and he looked into the possibilities of the radio business. He bought one broadcasting station with his wife's money — \$20,000 or some such sum — in his own name and

she ultimately bought two more in hers. There is a community-of-property law in Texas, anyhow. Other stations were linked with them. Elliott had developed as a promoter.

"He is a swell salesman," one admirer reported. "He deals only with the big shots. He knows how to take your \$50,000 and buy a station with it and let you have half the stock."

Nothing wrong about that, of course. He became first vice-president of the Young Democrats of Texas. He had not been in Texas long enough, some said, to know a jack rabbit when he saw it. His father's name won that honor for him, of course, but he was able to take care of himself after he got in. Some of the Young Democrats tried to jack him out of office and he went two-fisted on them:

"Show me a better man for the job," he said, "and I'll give it to him."

III

And that almost sums up the technique of the Roosevelts' problem child. Use the leverage of the family name and position to the limit, but remain independent of it—dependent on yourself—all the same. Realize that the label is not

enough: there are plenty of unsuccessful—worse, half-successful—Roosevelts around. Elliott is not yet a power in the politics of the Southwest and he may never be. But he is on his way. The Young Democrats who do not like him speak of him as The Young Dictator, which may be merely malice. What Elliott wants now is plenty of money for good living and security.

He is regarded as a hard lad in the radio industry, where hardness is taken for granted. Vice-presidents get their jobs because they can bring in the advertising, and lose them when they cannot, and Elliott's vice-presidents change like the red words in the electric signs, they go in and out so fast. His radio chain had one or two bad years while the depression was at its lowest, but Elliott was in there batting all the time. So were his vice-presidents. Lately he has been making some money. When he makes more money he can look into his personal prospects for power.

At a guess, he is not bothering about power right now because he always has before him the example of his elder brother. It was Jimmy who was passed the gravy, who made money in the insurance business, thereby reaping one full-length article in the *Saturday Eve-*

ning Post and two full-length articles in rebuttal in *Collier's*. Jimmy played his father's hand in Massachusetts politics, until he was eased out by Massachusetts politicians. He came to Washington as the Crown Prince, and Secret Service men guarded his home and his wife and his daughter and himself, until he acquired stomach ulcers. The movie industry is the dumping place for eminent personages who have been dumped, and Jimmy landed with Sam Goldwyn at \$30,000 a year. Mr. Goldwyn has been photographed in the act of smiling several times since the landing.

This sort of thing would not do for Elliott. He almost burned his fingers in that aviation episode. Not quite, of course, but the tips certainly got warm. His worst friends admit that he is bright. He has the same liking for his elder brother that a second son might be expected to have under the circumstances. He has observed that Jimmy, who has been loyal to his father and as suave as any of the suave young men and has spoken with the voice of Esau has not been getting anywhere politically. Jimmy has made some money, the precise amount being a matter of debate, but the voters have not called for him. Nor have the precinct cap-

tains, which is more important. And Elliott wants to get somewhere. Moreover, he wants to be his own man when he gets there.

Therefore Elliott is starting to build himself up in the Southwest as a wholly self-bottomed personality. He would not catch at a coat-tail to save himself from drowning. He has broadcast criticisms of the New Deal. This broadcasting has been done with an underhum to the effect that he is just repeating what he hears. He has merely reported on the love the Southwest bears for Cactus Jack Garner, well knowing that if he said anything else in Texas it would be held against him, and in spite of the fact that his eminent father regards Mr. Garner as a biological error. He has said things about taxes, which is not regarded as good parlor conversation in Washington, but which goes big out where the taxes are being paid. He has sneered at the Good Neighboring of the Mexican oil expropriators, which definitely makes good hearing to Texas ears. He is not getting in the way of any of today's politicians. Texas still remembers carpetbaggers. He is just building himself up. Making allies, perhaps. Perhaps even making friends.

Twenty years from now a big Roosevelt in the Southwest. . . . Figure that one out for yourself.

He may never be the big Roosevelt in the Southwest. But, if that is what he wants to be, he seems to be going about it the right way.

Elliott is playing his cards close to his shirt. He has not quarreled with the Administration, but he has edged away from the New Deal. He flailed the Federal Communications Commission mercilessly during recent public hearings in Washington. The FCC is one of the pets of his eminent father. It has the power of a silent and quibbling censorship which might conceivably be of great value in a hot campaign. Elliott so definitely called attention to some of the FCC's faults that Chairman McNinch ran to the White House the very next day. He would scarcely have done that if he had not believed that the President listens to the problem child on occasion.

Elliott has stepped out of the shadow of the White House, but he

has not stepped so far that he cannot step back in. When he calls on an advertiser he is the President's son. When he told the FCC that it had not been playing the game quite as nicely as the radio industry would like, he was the President's son. Most men in the business will say that what Elliott told the FCC was true and needed telling but that no other man dared tell it.

Elliott is the President's son. But when the New Deal comes to an end he will continue to be Elliott Roosevelt, prosperous young businessman and fearless reporter of facts. He will be away out in the sun, away from the shadow — continuing all the while, however, to be an affectionate son. And somewhere in the future in the Southwest will be discovered Elliott Roosevelt, reaching for power. First he must get the money. Those who know him well think he will get both.



NOTE ON UPLIFTERS

BY LOUIS D. BRANDEIS

The greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachment by men of zeal, well-meaning but without understanding.

LUNACY: RIGHT AND LEFT

Everybody in Germany is a National Socialist — the few outside the (Nazi) Party are either lunatics or idiots.

— Adolf Hitler, speaking at Klagenfurt, Austria.

The Soviet people are unanimously behind Stalin and the Communist Party. . . . Only criminals, spies, Trotskyists, underground vermin, and other social scum are opposed to the Party of Stalin.

— Earl Browder, American communist *Führer*, at the Hippodrome, New York.

Nazi Germany has solved its labor problem. No loyal German is without work. Only enemies of Hitler are in want.

— *Völkischer Beobachter*, April 10, 1939.

If there is anyone living in poverty in the Soviet Union, it can only be some small remnant of counter-revolutionists who have refused to merge themselves with the new social system.

— *New Masses*, March 28, 1939.

By kissing an Aryan girl, the Jew insulted not only the girl, but the entire German nation.

— Remarks of the Court at a trial in Hildesheim, Germany.

Comrades who maintain political, social or *personal* relationships with Trotskyists or other enemies of the Soviet Union are guilty of treason not only against the Party but against the entire international working class.

— Instructions to members of the American Communist Party.

The task of universities is not to teach objective science, but the militant, the warlike, the heroic.

— Dr. Kriek, Nazi author of *Education in the Third Reich*.

Until I became a Marxist I couldn't design my experiments properly.

— J. B. S. Haldane, eminent British scientist, in the *New Masses*, February 28, 1939.

(Compiled by Charles Yale Harrison)

SAN FRANCISCO, A DYING CITY

BY PHIL HAMILTON

HOVERING over San Francisco today is an air of hustle and bustle and hullabaloo. There is loud talk about the big new bridges, the spectacular Golden Gate International Exposition. So many enthusiastic noises are being made that an impressionable listener might suspect a second gold rush just around the corner. A more cautious one, though, might detect a faintly hysterical note in the hearty hosannas. He might even be reminded of a ship's orchestra blaring out a jazz tune as the bow of the vessel sinks slowly into the waves. For, behind the fixed smile on its false-face, San Francisco is a mighty sick city.

Throughout the United States births annually exceed deaths in an approximate ratio of three to two. For instance, in 1937 recorded births totalled 2,201,609 and deaths 1,450,715. But in San Francisco deaths have *exceeded* births each year since 1928! The best that the city Health Department can do in publishing population estimates is to refuse to admit an actual loss and

officially set the population for the past four years at a stationary figure, 693,000.

The commercial colic from which the city is suffering has plenty of painful symptoms. Business failures in 1938, for instance, increased in number by 18.8 per cent over the previous year and 52 per cent over the 1923-1925 period. Manufacturing employment and payrolls declined 14.3 and 13.4 per cent respectively from the 1937 level, to 60 and 57 per cent of the 1926 level. Wholesale trade slumped an estimated 14 per cent under 1937. Department store sales in 1938 fell off 11.3 per cent from the previous year. Railroad carloadings dropped 18.2; automobile sales 31.5; bank clearings 9.9; real estate values (measured by sales) declined 11 per cent. School attendance slumped from 107,362 in 1934 to 105,066 in 1938. These downward trends were more emphatic in San Francisco than in most other large cities.

The civic salesmen of San Francisco aren't ignorant of this state of

affairs. Even as they turn brave smiles on the audience, they are bickering and back-biting among themselves. They blame labor. They blame business. They blame politics. They even blame Grover Whalen. They blame everything handy, and all the while San Francisco grows sicker and sicker.

The financial fog which has settled over Frisco is thickest around the famous harbor. Shipping is the mainspring of the city's commercial life and this vital spot has been hard hit. While other seaports have been climbing out of depression, San Francisco has stood by and watched the withdrawal or serious curtailment in service of thirteen major steamship companies. One after another the lines have crossed San Francisco off their itineraries. Last year, despite the city's pleas before Congress and the President, the big intercoastal Panama Pacific luxury liners were withdrawn from Pacific waters. In the past ten years the harbor tonnage has declined nearly a third — ebbing in 1938 to the lowest figure since the opening of the Panama Canal in 1915. San Francisco tonnage figures look even sadder when compared with those of the port of Los Angeles — which show a gain for last year, while San Francisco was losing ground:

San Francisco Los Angeles

1910.....	6,866,148	1,709,294
1920.....	9,466,798	4,340,074
1930.....	12,448,242	25,920,159
1937.....	8,764,382	18,610,713
1938.....	7,950,289	20,264,264

The worst aspect of the shipping situation is that most of the boats which have abandoned the port are American-owned. The few newcomers are foreign vessels. This means loss of employment for Pacific coast seamen. It means that once-busy repair and docking facilities have fallen into disuse. The hundreds of little businesses which cater to ships and personnel in home ports where vessels remain for long stays have been crippled or wiped out. It is true that about three times as many ships use San Francisco Bay as use the actual port. But then it isn't especially profitable to sit on the empty docks and watch the ships go by.

Less spectacular than the slipping sea trade, but painful in its own right is the decline of business from the interior. Farm produce, for example, is staying away from San Francisco by the trainload. The recent and little-publicized farm boycott is a case in point. This thrust into the commercial heart of the city is an unorganized and leaderless, but nonetheless devastating, boycott by a large number of California farmers.

The movement started early in 1938 when an organized boycott was tentatively considered by Associated Farmers, Inc., which claims 30,000 members in California. The proposal was quickly rejected, but the effects lingered on — entirely unofficial but still strong. One result was the blank refusal of eight California counties to exhibit at the Golden Gate Exposition.

This rural wrath seems to be based on the feeling — held by many farmers — that labor-union activities in San Francisco have been particularly detrimental to the interests of fruit, truck, and stock farmers. The farmers charge the unions with racketeering and the unions charge the farmers with unfair obstruction of the organization of farm help. More than once unionists and farmers have come to actual blows. Phil Bancroft, fruit grower and vice-president of Associated Farmers, expressed the farm sentiment this way:

If labor unions are going to declare our milk, wool, and other products "hot," then we may have to tear a leaf out of San Francisco's book and declare all San Francisco "hot."

Just how hot these farmers have made it for San Francisco is indicated in a secret committee report made to the Chamber of Commerce which found

ample evidence of a definite trend to avoid San Francisco as a trade center on the part of a large number of producer farmers and others throughout the area naturally tributary to the city. . . . As a concrete example of the trend, members of a co-operative pear association decided to ship the 1938 crop through Sacramento, though the cost of so doing is \$1.20 per ton in excess of the rate charged through San Francisco. The feeling that actuated this move is widespread.

Last summer the Hotel Association charged that, due to the farmer boycott, local hostelries were experiencing one of the worst seasons ever known, while Los Angeles hotels had been bustling with activity during their normally quiet season. Another Hotel Association statement revealed that

A large number of hotels are already in the hands of mortgagees and receivers, while many others are on the verge of bankruptcy. And almost every week some discouraged and disappointed hotel owner throws up his hands and quits.

II

What's wrong with San Francisco? The press and the businessmen blame "labor trouble."

This labor bogeyman lifted its frightful head five years ago when some 150,000 workers became general strikers for a day, bringing production, distribution, transportation, and other services to a

standstill. It was then that CIO Longshoreman Harry Bridges exploded into prominence as a labor leader. Opposed to Bridges is hard-hitting Harry Lundeberg, leader of the sailors, strongman of the seagoing crafts, and AFL Teamster ally. The CIO and the AFL in San Francisco are about evenly divided in strength and number. And both sides mean business when they gird for an occasional waterfront skull-cracking melee.

A city-wide Employers' Council, aiming to function as one big union of those who employ, was launched at the beginning of this year. At a town meeting attended by employer representatives, labor leaders, and 10,000 spectators, paint manufacturer W. P. Fuller, Jr., voiced his version of the city's troubles. "San Francisco," he said, "has seen goon squads, beef squads, blood, violence, and civil warfare. San Francisco has seen citizens beaten in the streets and intimidated in their homes. San Francisco has seen enough. She wants peace."

But the Labor Unions have another answer to the question, What's wrong with Frisco? They call it "employer trouble." They blame the businessmen with inefficient and discriminatory management. The farmers, in turn, put most of the blame on the unions, but they,

too, have a word to say against the business interests. They claim that San Francisco is guided by "immediate selfish interests and not the broad interests of the entire area."

All the while this blaming-bee is going on the city's business lords are engaged in a frantic attempt to stem the careening commercial toboggan by blasts of optimistic oratory and liberal doses of "constructive publicity." Official reassurance that "San Francisco is not a ghost town" set off the campaign in a spectacular broadcast at a jittery mass meeting of several thousand salesmen herded into the Civic Auditorium by Chamber of Commerce brass hats. Salty letters almost as deadly as bullets began to fly between the defenders of the city's fame and those who told of its plight.

The wordy battle still rages — with besieged loyalists denying everything, attacking rivals loudly shouting "Ghost Town!" And in San Francisco, pardner, them's fighting words.

Terrified at the prospect of the waterfront debacle becoming known to the East, local impresarios of publicity studiously avoid mentioning the annual harbor-cargo tonnage figures. Instead they broadcast statistics which lump together cargo handled in all ports on San

Francisco Bay. They also are lavish with figures on "registered tonnage" of arriving and departing vessels. This phrase "registered tonnage" doesn't refer to cargo at all. It refers to the aggregate registry weight of ships (loaded or empty) which touch at the port, and every ship is counted each time it arrives and each time it departs. Another figure the civic statisticians have a fondness for is the total cargo handled in the San Francisco Customs District. Happily for the optimists, this Customs District takes in ports from Monterey (one hundred miles south) to Eureka (three hundred miles north).

While the ballyhoo men are trying to exorcise the business debacle by denying its existence, city officials have no program at all except to get themselves rehired at election come November. Mouselike Mayor Angelo Rossi crochets his time away at City Hall hoping that, somehow, things will get better.

When questions about business get too pertinent, San Francisco's civic salesmen like to point quickly but proudly to the new bridges spanning the bay and Golden Gate. These structures do look magnificent in the newsreels, but a closer examination is not so impressive.

No doubt many a visitor from the East, detraining at Oakland to

finish his journey to San Francisco on a ferry, wonders why his train did not cross on the \$77,000,000 span. The answer is that although the bridge carries inter-urban trains it is not strong enough to support the transcontinental steam locomotives. The bridge was designed to carry only the lighter electrically propelled trains. To make it suitable for carrying the heavy steam engines and main-line trains would have called for more money than was thought justified. Opened in 1936, the Bay bridge carried 9,104,765 vehicles in 1937 and 8,621,196 in 1938 — with a corresponding slump in toll revenue.

The really big bridge headache, however, is caused by the beautiful structure stretching across the harbor entrance at the Golden Gate. This bridge has the world's longest span between two piers, an awe-inspiring 4200 feet. Less inspiring is the fact that clearance above water surface is, for the largest ships, quite too scant for peace of mind if not for safety. The 42,000-ton *Empress of Britain*, measuring 212 feet from mean waterline to topmast, squeezed under the bridge at low tide with a bare six feet to spare, and the bay was calm. In rough water, a vessel such as the *Empress* would have to remain outside San Francisco's protecting

harbor. And if larger ships than those now afloat are built and their top rigging is higher, San Francisco will be a closed port to them.

Another unhappy fact about the Golden Gate Bridge is its operating deficit of \$429 a day, or more than \$150,000 annually. The taxpayers are worried, for if revenue does not produce bond interest for the bridge, the taxpayers must. The bridge revenue for the last six months of 1938 was \$5234 daily, the operating expenses \$5663. And the latter figure allows nothing for reduction of bonded indebtedness.

III

The biggest and easiest money San Francisco had seen in a long time was the cash coughed up by the Federal government to help pay for the big bridges. And so it naturally seemed like a fine idea to grab another chunk of this bounty while the grabbing was good. The second bait was the Golden Gate Exposition. So the doctors of publicity began whooping it up for a new exposition to cure the city's doldrums. Mud was pumped up from the bottom of the bay and some \$5,000,000 was pumped out of the U. S. Treasury — and San Francisco had the Golden Gate International Exposition.

"Shine for '39" became the talisman guaranteed to cure the peculiar brand of jitters which had the city in its grip. Hard-pressed businessmen and taxpayers began singing this tune with fervor born of desperation. Long before opening day the statistic jugglers had conjured up some wonderful, if somewhat wishful, advance figures. Unhappily, the true figures were not so strange as the fictitious — and not so big. Attendance for the first 72 days, comprising one quarter of the 288 days of the fair, reached only 2,468,371, instead of the 5,000,000 needed to break even. And even then a considerable number of admissions were paid for at less than half the regular rate, including thousands of children at 10¢ each.

At the end of the first month money was coming in so slowly that employed personnel on the grounds had to be cut from 12,000 to about 7000. When customers failed to show up in expected numbers, thirty cashiers lost their jobs one day, twenty-two on another. Most days, before the cuts, the employees outnumbered the cash customers on Treasure Island at any one time. Concessionaires were demanding, and getting, rent reductions. And, according to police reports, pickpockets, disgusted with the meagre take, packed up and

went home. A month after echoes from the booming guns of the gala opening celebration had died down, and it became known that Treasure Island's cash registers were playing dirges rather than swing tunes, there was talk heard around town of throwing the exposition directors into the bay and closing up.

From an economic standpoint, the best that can be said for the fair is that it has furnished employment for a considerable number of people who would otherwise be on WPA. Instead of being the build-up for a super-colossal and altogether stupendous Gold Rush Centennial in '49, the present fiasco has a much better chance of becoming, for Californians, the fair to end fairs.

Beyond a doubt, the city is slipping. Every day, businessmen are telling each other in loud whispers that poor old Frisco is on the skids. Business conditions throughout the country were better last January than during that month in 1938. But trade statistics reveal that the San Francisco area was not doing as well as other sections. For example, Dun's Review "Regional Trade Barometer" shows Frisco in a 6.2

per cent pick-up. The United States as a whole gained 7.7 per cent; Los Angeles 10.4; Portland and Seattle 11. By the end of March San Francisco trade was in a sharp decline while Los Angeles was holding steady and some areas were still advancing.

Gloomy as the picture may be, however, it is not without its rays of hope. There are many who stoutly believe in San Francisco's future. And they base their calculations on the notion that the bottom has been reached, with conditions so bad they can't get any worse, and so must get better. It may well be so. The next few years may bring about an upturn in the city's fortunes.

In the meantime, down along the waterfront more and more docks fall into idle emptiness. Up along Market Street more and more buildings are plastered with To Lease and For Sale signs. Up across the beautiful bridges, fewer and fewer vehicles travel. . . . Some day before long, perhaps, the people of San Francisco will stop whistling in the dark and turn around to face the taunt of "Ghost Town."



NEGROES REJECT COMMUNISM

BY GEORGE S. SCHUYLER

THE failure of communist propaganda in the United States is most strikingly attested by its fruitless missioning in Aframerica. Superficially it would seem that to the Negroes, who have the lowest economic and social status in the Republic, bolshevism would have the strongest appeal. No other Americans, not even the malarious Southern crackers, appear to have less to lose and more to gain from revolutionary overturn. Most Negroes, generations after Emancipation, enjoy today less economic, social, and political rights than the Russian *moujiks* under Nicholas II. Still subjected to systematized economic spoliation and race discrimination, there is bitterness in their hearts.

Naturally the communists regarded Negroes as sure-fire converts, and have proselyted them these twenty years. They have tried every bait, device, dodge, and argument to win black adherents. Holding interracial dances, defending Negroes afoul of the law, bulldozing landlords, inundating

Negroes with "literature," staging countless demonstrations and marches, endorsing Father Divine, nominating black nobodies for office, and courting Negro leaders.

But despite this prodigious activity, the American Negro remains cold to communism. With the communist indictment of traditional mistreatment of black America by white America, he agrees. But he rejects the Muscovite cure. During his three-century struggle to avoid extermination, he has developed certain special techniques of survival, and most communist methods run counter to them. He is suspicious of any program that over-simplifies his problem by ignoring shadings and nuances, and recommends identical tactics in Birmingham and Buffalo.

After a century of listening to black hustlers with Valhallas for sale, the Negro has become wary of schemes for instant salvation. Such movements have habitually attracted only the lunatic fringe, goaded by a handful of disgruntled

opportunists. Marcus Garvey, with his incomparable Back-to-Africa set-up, could corral only 30,000 members. More jeers than cheers currently greet the amphigories of Father Divine, and the followers of kindred dark-town messiahs are noisier than numerous. Even the Negro clergy no longer wields its old-time influence. And whereas two dollars was once sufficient to buy a black ballot, Mose now talks knowingly about patronage. In short, the Aframerican is perhaps the most cynical fellow in the Union, and is less likely than the white proletarian to sign his death warrant in a moment of emotional intoxication. True, he has only his life to lose, but he wants to hold on to that.

The communists started out by ignoring the fact that propaganda which might split the ears of the Muscovite groundlings falls hollowly upon those of Sam. Like his white brother in the USA, the American Negro is a proletarian by compulsion and not by choice. He regards the bourgeoisie with adulation rather than antagonism and, like most other Americans, cannot see "culture" except in white tie and tails. His consuming ambition is to become a bourgeois himself, and in this he is a carbon copy of his white fellow-American. At the

same time he is more cut off than the white man from the pre-American past, and therefore less responsive to European nostrums. The white proletarian has a background of serfdom reaching back to Caesar, Greece, and beyond. It's almost his native state. The black proletarian was a free man until modern times. And, finally, the totalitarian state is too reminiscent of the slave plantation.

Moreover most Negroes see in a successful mob-revolution here the final triumph of their historic antagonists, the Poor Whites. Regardless of Marxian theories and soap-box interpretations, the Aframerican cannot regard the white proletarian as his friend and comrade. His advance since Emancipation has been in the face of the stubborn opposition of the whites with whom communists urge him to unite. He cannot quite believe that any revolution will cause the crackers and white proletarians up North to view him with sudden affection. His healthy cynicism inclines him to doubt that on the day the hammer-and-sickle flies from the White House he will be accepted on terms of equality.

White proletarian prejudice against the Negro was originally as strong in the North as in the South. As early as the late 'sixties Negro

workers vainly sought inclusion in the white labor movement. The Knights of Labor fell partly because white unionists wanted nothing to do with black unionists. The AFL has been the most effective agency in barring Negroes from all but manual and menial labor. Because of this deep-seated antagonism the majority of the mills, factories, and stores operating on a non-union basis retain the color bar. What toehold the black worker has gained in industry has been in spite of the white worker.

II

After the Civil War, the most militant proletarian movement in the South was the Ku Klux Klan. During Reconstruction, political power and economic preference gradually shifted to the white proletariat that had served and starved under the old regime. Promptly it legalized jim-crow cars, schools, restaurants and hotels, disenfranchised the Negro, taxed him without representation, made justice a terror, and forced black workers to the economic fringes where they hang so precariously today. A revolution that would put these people in a dictatorial position does not attract the blacks.

It was inevitable, however, that

some Negroes should identify themselves with the Communist Party; some colored citizens have been caught in the current of every movement that has swept across the American scene. What embittered many to the point of seeing Red was the memory of their treatment during the World War, when Americans advised the French people not to treat Negroes as victorious soldiers, but as pariahs, so as not to "spoil" them. Hustled home after the Armistice, they were faced with a nationwide effort to "put them in their place." Small wonder that some toyed with communism.

However, until the late 'twenties, all these black followers of Lenin could have been crowded into a corner drug store with no discomfort. A few Negro "leaders" sought vainly to justify occasional handouts from the Party by scaring up followers, but they were loud-mouthed, unkempt comrades who aroused the same antagonism in most American Negroes that they did in most whites. Capable Negroes during that period were busy in the fields of insurance, real estate, education, journalism, religion, agriculture, social work, and the professions, acquiring automobiles, property, and college training for their children, so there was

little first-rate material from which Moscow emissaries could draw an able leadership. Those potential leaders who joined up found Communist Party restrictions a hindrance, hence the Party seldom benefited from their abilities. Small wonder, then, that the Negro masses, led by men and women who by contrast with the Negro Communist leaders were prodigies of intellect and integrity, not only turned a deaf ear to the black Reds, but looked with doubt and suspicion on the white folks who selected them.

What small success Communism achieved among Negroes reached its highest point during the 1932-36 Depression, when, strangely enough, more money was available than ever for the purpose of proselyting the Negro. Rival organizations were set up to wean away the membership of groups long maintained by Negroes for their protection and advancement. One of the first of these organizations, formed to steal the thunder of the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was the International Labor Defense, originally headed by a Negro shirt-front. It was the ILD's mishandling of the Scottsboro case that did most to discredit the

communists among Negroes. As soon as the case broke, the NAACP, with years of experience in handling and winning legal victories in the South, hired a firm of distinguished white Birmingham attorneys to defend the youths. This automatically blocked any charge of Northern "invasion." The NAACP spent \$7000 in preliminary work and refrained from threatening the Alabama authorities or identifying the case with the overthrow of capitalism.

The NAACP was in no way prepared for the tactics of the communists who shortly muscled in. White agents were sent to the boys' parents and guardians with wild tales about the Association. In a little while the ILD was representing the accused, and proceeded to do all the wrong things — assuming, of course, that its primary purpose was freeing the boys. Its ballyhoo was effective everywhere except in Alabama, where the boys were jailed. Comrades streamed to Alabama, and two or three narrowly missed the rope and faggot. The Governor and other officials were swamped with denunciatory messages.

There has never been a satisfactory audit of the collections and donations but Samuel Leibowitz charged that the ILD collected

\$250,000. At any rate, little money was left after "expenses" were deducted. No previous communist campaign ever garnered more gold or fell shorter of its goal. Eventually, the communists were so discredited that they relinquished the case to more sincere hands. After that, four of the lads were freed. Negotiations for the release of the others are proceeding favorably.

III

The greatest growth of Party work among Negroes paralleled the expansion of the New Deal. Here was hope where there had been hopelessness. Negroes played a prominent part in the organization of the unemployed who were later incorporated into the Workers' Alliance, and a number of potential working-class leaders were uncovered. Some of them later rendered distinguished service in the great CIO organizational drive in 1936-37. But the activity was short-lived. Negroes in charge of many of these organizations and unions were ousted in the old familiar manner. Then the security of the WPA has caused many to cease listening to Moscow. Stalin's stopping of funds for African revolutionary work, along with his opportunistic sale of oil to Italy

during the Ethiopian aggression, have been hard pills for the colored comrades to swallow.

Negro communists once terrorized by Party discipline are today singing the blues. One of the disgruntled is Charles White, a Negro organizer, who was ousted from the Party after having spent some time in Russia, and having been active in America. He charges that the Party has been replacing all of its Negro organizers with white ones; that in New York, where the Party controls over \$1,500,000 in activities of one kind and another, it employs less than fifty Negroes, most of these in menial jobs. Harold Williams, an organizer since 1923, charges that the Communist Party treats Negroes exactly like the GOP, subordinating their problems to "broader" interests, and that Negro membership has declined 79 per cent in the New York area in the past year. The late Dr. Reuben Young, an ardent Negro communist, who had returned from Ethiopia and Russia, was booted out of the Party because he criticized its neglect of African work and the sale of oil to Italy. Mrs. Frankie Duty, a Negro organizer who had served for three years on the national board of the Workers' Alliance and three years on its New York general executive

board, resigned from the Party, and in the *Amsterdam News* said:

. . . I resigned because I want freedom of speech and action, neither of which is permitted in the Communist Party . . . Because I questioned them (the communists), they did all they could to sabotage my work in the Alliance. The Workers' Alliance is nothing but a communist racket. They collect 55¢ from everyone who joins and 25¢ a month dues . . . Every day the members of the outfit come around soliciting funds for this and that, until the poor Harlem people on Relief . . . haven't enough left to eat on.

There seems to be a complete unanimity among thinking Negroes as to the effectiveness of communist work among Negroes. It is nil. The writer has gathered opinions of Negro observers in Dallas, Philadelphia, Chicago, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Birmingham, and other centers of communist effort among the blacks. They all sound the same. This report from Detroit more or less sums them up:

The effort put forth to hook the Negro has been sporadic and ineffective . . . the Party has generally passed the peak of its effectiveness among the Negroes. All that remains of the vigorous breast-beating, tub-thumping era of 1930-32 is a sort of alluvial deposit or residue of terms, and the techniques of mass organization and movements.

But even these techniques are not new to American Negroes. They were fighting for economic, political, and civic rights long before the Communist Party existed.

The effectiveness with which Negro organizations have successfully mobilized money and numbers behind the defense of the Houston Martyrs, the Elaine "Rioters," Dr. Sweet of Detroit, the Federal anti-lynching bill, and the campaign for educational equality indicates that they are not novices. They fought on the barricades in East St. Louis, Chicago, Springfield, Washington, D.C., Longview, and Tulsa. The speeches and writings of post-Civil War Negro labor leaders indicate that they were then as familiar with the class struggle as are communists.

Even the slim claim that communist agitation has increased the Negro's militancy is untenable. This would discount the influence of the 200 Negro newspapers and magazines with their 1,500,000 weekly circulation, the virtual disappearance of illiteracy, and the NAACP, with its 400 branches functioning since 1909. Being a canny fellow, the Negro is militant when there is hope of success. Otherwise he bides his time. There may come a day when he will go Red, but that will never happen until he first sees white Americans waving the Red flag and learns that Marxism is, at last, really popular. Right now it's enough trouble being black without going Red.

CAPSULE WISDOM

THE AMERICAN MERCURY's monthly Stuffed Shirt Awards are bestowed upon the authors of the following assorted profundities:

Thomas J. Pendergast, Kansas City boss, after his indictment: "There's nothing the matter with me — they persecuted Christ on Good Friday and nailed Him to the cross."

Stephen F. Chadwick, National Commander of the American Legion: "The Dies Committee is the most important thing to the American people since the Constitution."

Senator Robert R. Reynolds of North Carolina: "The only people in the world who are excited about what is going on in Europe are the people of the United States."

Mohandas K. Gandhi: "All should resort to simultaneous disarmament. I am certain as I am sitting here that this heroic act would open Chancellor Adolf Hitler's eyes and disarm him."

Oswaldo Aranha, Brazil's Foreign Minister: "Only communists repudiate their debts."

James J. Hines, Tammany chief, after his conviction: "Dewey has his conscience to live with."

Viacheslav Molotov, Premier of Russia: "The basic historic task of the second Five-Year Plan has been fulfilled — all exploiting classes have been completely eliminated."

Dr. Charles Seymour, President of Yale: "Boys now never go from Yale to saloons."

Senator Key Pittman, chairman of Foreign Relations Committee: "Nothing any witness could say would change my mind on the subject at all."

Count Stephen Csaky, Hungary's Foreign Minister: "I have formal assurance that Germany does not intend to attack either Rumania or any one else."

Dr. Henry Noble MacCracken, president of Vassar College: "America is God's last chance to save the world."

► *The creator of H*Y*M*A*N K*A*P*L*A*N
visits a Five-and-Ten Cent Follies in Chicago.*

PEEP SHOW

BY LEONARD ROSS

CHICAGO's Loop ends at Van Buren Street. State Street south of that is the asylum of burlesque shows, pawnshops, flophouses, chili parlors, hamburger joints, and noisy saloons where you can get a stein of beer for a nickel and a deadly glass of gin for a dime. This is the Bowery of Chicago — flashy, bawdy, vulgar; the sidewalks are always sprinkled with cigarette butts, the air heavy with sweaty smells. The commoners who ramble up and down this impolite stretch are what is known as down-at-heelers — misfits, offcasts, bums.

I explored South State Street on a muggy spring afternoon. It was like walking through a particularly cheap carnival. Values have gone haywire here. A pair of socks sells for 8¢, ties for 9¢, undershirts for 11¢. You can buy razor blades for a penny, and 50¢ will get you tatooed for all time by the Tatoo King. On the cultural side, South State Street is right up there fighting. It is clogged with gimcrack movie houses. *Wages of Sin* ("Deceived and Deserted She Shot Her Las-

civious *Betrayer!*") can be seen for 10¢. "Marihuana — Weed With Roots in *Hell!*" runs up into more money — 15¢. If neither of these parables intrigues you, there is always good old *White Slave Racket Exposed!* — or even *Abyss of Shame!*, showing "Pure Maidens Devoured By The Vulturous Passions of Men!"

It wasn't easy to steel myself against the whispers from the *demi-monde*, but I did — at first. Then, weakened by the moral crisis, I surrendered to the evil eye of a place called "Continuous Show — Special Today — 5¢." This was a really miserable dive with drawings of happy, nude women all over its open foyer. Tantalizing signs sent my metabolism way up by proclaiming: "Daring!" "Sensational!" "Reveals *all!*" "Straight From Paris Exposition!" (It didn't say which one.) Over the ticket booth was this placard: "Nickel-Odium." There was no telling *what* the mind that thought that up might do next, so I paid my 5¢ and went inside.

The interior was bare, dirty, and

dreadful to behold. Some ten men were crowded before a platform; all but three had their hats on, and all looked guilty. They were a strange cross-section of American manhood. There were two out-and-out bums, a man in freshly-pressed tweeds, several minors who apparently held to the theory that hats cause baldness, a hollow-eyed young man in a raincoat, and an elderly gentleman who looked like "My loved ones are cared for!" in the insurance ads. They avoided each other's eyes, and no one spoke.

On the platform stood a battered piano. Its front was removed so that doubting Thomases could actually see it work. A blind man sat at this denuded instrument. A large sign said: "Blind! No Fingers on Either Hand! He Plays!" No sooner did I take my place among my peers than the man at the piano began to assault the keys. The wooden hammers went like all fury, the piano wires screamed in pain, and the strident fury of *Tiger Rag* howled in the fetid air. The man swung it and the piano hovered on the edge of insanity. You never heard such a rumpus. The man played like a demon *in extremis*. He played very well, for a blind man with no fingers on either hand. He annihilated *Tiger Rag*, swept into *Hallelujah* and tossed off *Col-*

legiate as if it were mere child's play. He had a good left jab. Then quiet fell, with a bang. The wires quivered, the hammers nursed their wounds in silence, and we all stood there, dazed. We didn't even have the sportsmanship to applaud. "Jeeze!" breathed one of the boys in front of me. He looked as if he had seen a ghost.

Suddenly a man appeared from behind a curtain and raised his hand. He was a man you wouldn't want to meet on a sunny day. His face was hard, sleek, refractory. Your glance bounced back off that face. He cried: "No one can say this wunnerful playin' wasn't wort five cents!" No one was man enough to challenge this. "Now, men. Behind this curtain is some-thin' no live, red-blooded, he-man would ever want to miss! Three dancin' beauties, *right in the flesh!* No more'n twelve inches from your very eyes!" He dropped his voice confidentially. "You men know why we can't show our real show out here in front. I don't hafta go into details. I ain't sayin' nothin' about police regulations. . . . Al-right, alright! But behind that curtain is the *real thing!* When you see this, *you've seen everything!* Only twenny-five cents, men. . . ."

The two bums promptly pushed forward, paid their quarters, and

went behind the curtain. (If those gents weren't decoys, then all my years of haunting phony auction sales have been a waste of time.) Four or five of the men paid their quarters. The minors consulted hastily, growled in disgust, and left. I paid my quarter and went behind the curtain. I was facing a tiny stage that was no more than four feet long, two feet deep, and about a foot off the floor. The backdrop seemed to be an assortment of sarongs, sewn together by a paralytic.

"Alright, men!" the Man announced. "First is our hot little Spanish dancer! Okay, Kenosha!" A victrola record began to croak and out came the hot little Spanish dancer, Kenosha. She was neither hot, little, Spanish, nor a dancer. She was a mammal with gross features and the expression of a paperclip. She wore a feathery brassiere, feathery tights, and a pair of old street shoes. Her thighs, I am forced to report, were bruised. Her "dance" consisted of shuffling each big foot cautiously and snapping two fingers. The feathers on the brassiere were the only things that seemed to move. I was grateful for this. After a moment Kenosha stopped, without any warning whatsoever, and disappeared behind the outraged sarongs.

"Next," the Man cried fervently, "that sizzlin' ball of *fire* — Ginger!"

Out came the sizzling ball of *fire*, Ginger. The fire had been extinguished long, long ago. Ginger was a blonde — older and huskier than Kenosha, who was no sylph. She had even less expression. She was chewing gum. She wore an opaque brassiere, sensible tights as such things go, and a pair of house slippers. Her dance can only be described as a slight drooping of the shoulders relieved by an occasional nervous twitch. Once she raised a hand; then, exhausted, fell back into the twitching. She chewed her gum, indulged in a final half-hearted "bump," and went away.

"And now, the girl the whole town's talking about!" the Man cried loudly, but without conviction. "The one and only — Frenchy!"

Out came the one and only, Frenchy — a black haired, tallow-skinned girl who worked up a rather good sweat by throwing her elbows around pointlessly while she tried to fling her abdomen out of the front entrance. Her eyes seemed to be fixed on a distant star. She went through all the historic variations of rolling, grinding, shimmying, and champing at the bit. Then she stopped dead in her tracks,

hitched her brassiere up, and walked off. The performance for real, red-blooded he-men was over.

II

‘Now, men!’ the Man cried, with the air of one about to pull a giraffe out of thin air. “That was only a weak sample. Back here — ” he pointed to yet another curtain “— there’s a certain booth where the girls go to town! Dancin’ on *mirrors!*” His voice became sedulous. “No need to go into details. Any you men here been to Paris know what I’m talkin’ about!” His voice became brave, exultant. “When you see this there’s *no more to see!* Only twenny-five cents. . . .”

The two bums promptly pressed forward again, waving quarters. The men hesitated. Then a rabbit little man with glasses and a pitiful mustache stepped forward nervously and went behind the curtain. The man in the business suit snickered and paid his admission. A fellow with a sour expression forked over. “My loved ones are cared for” went behind the curtain. I paid my quarter. No price is too high to pay for Art.

I saw a big square black booth, about eight feet high and four feet wide. On each of the four sides, on

eye-level, were narrow observation slits. The other men had taken up their posts expectantly; the skills betrayed their function by hanging back. I went to a free space, put my eyes against the hole, and saw the moist, beady stare of all the other men’s eyes. We were looking right at each other. It was weird, like looking into a tank where eyes, instead of fish, swam. I lowered my glance hastily, and discovered that the booth had a large round mirror in the center of the floor. On benches around the side sat none other than our old friends Kenosha, Ginger, and Frenchy. They were in the same unforgettable costumes. Kenosha was yawning. Ginger still chewed gum. Frenchy was scratching her back.

The victrola began to play. Kenosha got up, stepped on the mirror, and began to imitate a dying Gaul. It was the same weary, dreary dance she had risen to a moment ago. The eyes peering through the slits dropped to the mirror with a unanimity rare in the democratic state. There was nothing special to see. Ginger followed Kenosha, and Frenchy followed Ginger.

Frenchy stopped. The victrola stopped. The exhibition stopped. The men left the peep-holes, looking annoyed. We started to leave.

Suddenly a man called to us from a flight of stairs I noticed for the first time: "Up here, men! This is where the *real* thing goes on. It's free. Just follow me!" He gave us a finger-wiggling come-hither gesture. We trooped up the long flight of stairs as one man. On the second floor we entered a room with red walls, lit by several dim red lights. It seemed *very* erotic. In the center of this lusty chamber was another peep-hole booth. It was the same size as the one downstairs, but it was octagonal and it had a top. Instead of open slits, this box had binocular peep-holes. Next to each aperture was a coin slot and a succinct sign: "Look Up," "Look Down," "Look Straight Ahead." The man who had trapped us said softly, "Come closer, men, where I can talk to you private." He led us to a corner. "Come closer, men."

The men wouldn't come too close, and I don't blame them. Our guide can be visualized, vaguely, as the sort of creature you would expect to see if you picked up a damp rock. He had long, uncombed hair, long side-burns, pale eyes, and a pornographic look. His skin was alarmingly like floor wax, and his teeth had the rich patina of cigarette smoke. When he smiled I sort of waited for a hyena to howl nearby.

"Men," he whispered, "this booth's been here eight years, which gives you an idea how popular it is with the real *man* public in Chi. It's run by the girl in there, and the management don't get a cent from this special show. . . . I'm just here for your convenience." He eyed each of us in turn. "I ain't gonna give you a speech, men. I got only one thing to say. When you see this, men, you'll see the *end of the road!*" Someone coughed. "The one and only Fifi, doin' her famous Parisian dancel I advise you not to take your eyes off her for a single minute! Pick your favorite view, men — bird's view, worm's view, close-up. The *end of the road*, men! I got plenty nickels here. . . ."

There was a minor crush as men got coins and hurried to their "favorite view." By the time I changed a dollar, only "Look Straight Ahead" was left. There was a little tin plate behind the slot, so that I could see nothing. A victrola began to play. The ape-man cried, "Drop your nickels, men! Let 'em have it, Fifi!" There was a cannonade of metallic clicks. The tin plates flipped up. From my post I saw the face, neck, and philanthropic bosom of Fifi. She wasn't the sort of girl you'd bring home to meet Mother. She looked

more like a Trixie than a Fifi. Her eyes were grotesquely mascaraed and she had on rayon underthings. She was, I suppose, dancing. The only part of the action I could see was a frenetic oscillation of her shoulders. The rest of her responded solely through that phenomenon physicists call "sympathetic vibration." In twenty fleeting seconds the tin plate dropped. I inserted another nickel. The tin plate flipped up. Fifi was still oscillating. The tin plate dropped down and I inserted another nickel. This piquant process continued for several minutes. Then the men began to desert the peep-holes in annoyance. The change-maker watched us like a hawk. Just at the strategic moment, when we were beginning to look for the exit, he yelled, "Fifi! Show them Fuzzy Wuzzy!"

The men rushed back to the peep-holes in a frenzy; there was a downpour of nickels. This time I got "Look Down." Fifi's slightly animated legs were revealed to me. She was dancing on a mirror. She had on a pair of orchid tights and high-heeled boudoir slippers. What her dance was supposed to be I have never succeeded in figuring out; in idle moods I think of it simply as "Diana and the Oil-Burner." Suddenly the sour young

man came over to me and said, "Nuts! If you see anything, let me know." I saw nothing and I let him know. He stood right next to me for several minutes, waiting for bulletins. All was quiet on the libidinal front.

Again the men began to leave the peep-holes. The rabbitly little man with the mustache looked bewildered. The businessman sneered quite openly now. "My loved ones are cared for" kept his dignity. The Man suddenly yelled, "Give 'em 66!" and there was a stampede. This time I got "Look Up." Looking up revealed a mirror in which I saw the reflection of Fifi from head to waist, a bodily zone which was clearly *hors de combat*.

In a few moments the men retreated from their posts, silent but annoyed. Now the beast played his trump card. He exclaimed, "Just a minute, fellows! I'm gonna ask Fifi if she won't put on the dance she did at Spider Kelly's in Juarez." He rapped on the door to the booth; it half-opened. "Fifi," he said earnestly, "I was just wonderin' if you wouldn't put on the number you did down at Spider Kelly's. You know what I mean. Just for this special group of men."

We heard a nasal feminine organ say, "Naw. I don't put that number on for nickels."

"Aw, come on," our provider cooed. "Just this once."

"I don't think I ought to, Joe."

"Aw, go on. These men would appreciate it."

They discussed this moot point for a few breathless moments, just loud enough for us to hear. Then Joe cried triumphantly, "Okay, men! She's gonna do it!"

The men beat their heads against the booth grabbing views. I got "Look Straight Ahead."

The victrola sang nostalgically of *Sweet Sue*. The nickels dropped, the tin plates clicked, and we saw Fifi, the girl of no man's dreams, in the dance she had done at Spider Kelly's. I have never been to Spider Kelly's, but I got a pretty good idea as to why Fifi was working in Chicago. The alleged dance was exactly the same demonstration of semi-static vegetation she had been doing all along for a nickel.

Two or three views per man was enough. The sweet sound of nickels dropping stopped, for good. The hollow-eyed fellow in the raincoat went up to Joe and said coldly, "What a gyp!"

Joe smiled.

"Is that all?" asked Hollow-Eyes bitterly.

Joe said, "Yeh." He began to count the money he had taken in. "Exit straight ahead."

We left the Red Room *en masse*, went through a corridor modeled after the Black Hole of Calcutta, and took a long flight of stairs which let us out at the front of the building on South State Street, away from the entrance. The men who run the "Nickel-Odium" are no fools.

I had spent \$1.70. Men were still entering the tantalizing premises. I walked up South State Street, taking very deep breaths.



DEFINITION

By JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE

A politician thinks of the next election; a statesman, of the next generation.

BUCHMANISM: OPIATE FOR THE CLASSES

BY ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES

HISTORIANS will doubtless be busy for half a century ferretting out all the fingers that helped concoct the Munich pie last October. But already it is possible to know who heated the oven and kept the atmosphere at the proper level to create such a masterpiece of political cookery. That man was none other than Frank Nathan Daniel Buchman, known in the colleges as "Old Moral Uplift" and among his followers as the great "Soul Surgeon," founder of the Oxford Group Movement and Christian Apostle to the British aristocracy.

It sounds utterly fantastic to assert that an obscure Pennsylvania Dutch ex-Lutheran minister and YMCA secretary, later notorious as the leader of an unsuccessful erotic revivalist movement in American colleges, should ever have taken a leading part in determining the destiny of Europe, the British Empire, and therefore the whole world. It *is* fantastic. Yet the proof of it is in a pamphlet extensively circulated by members of the Ox-

ford Group Movement, entitled *Moral Rearmament: the Battle for Peace*. Edited by H. W. ("Bunny") Austin, the British tennis player, the first edition of 250,000 copies was printed in England in December and consists of some twenty-two manifestoes, all clearly Buchmanite in inspiration and phrasing, which had appeared in the British press in the preceding eight months. The signatures on these manifestoes include those of 25 peers in important government positions, 12 baronets ditto, 33 MP's, 37 champion athletes, 21 leading journalists, 17 trade union heads, a number of industrialists, and a few distinguished academicians—in short, a fair cross-section of the British ruling class. Among them are Earl Baldwin; the Marquess of Salisbury; the Earl of Clarendon, Governor-General of South Africa; Lord Desborough, President of the London Chamber of Commerce; Lord Milne, former Chief of the Imperial General Staff; Lord Stamp of the Bank of England. It was for these people, and people like them,

that Neville Chamberlain acted in his journeys to Hitler. Manifestly, then, *Moral Rearmament* is a historic document of some importance.

The slogan "Moral Rearmament" as a solution for all the ills of the world was presented by Frank Buchman on May 28, 1938, in a London speech in which he expounded the ideas reiterated in later manifestoes. Said Mr. Buchman:

The world's condition cannot but cause disquiet and anxiety. Hostility piles up between nation and nation, labor and capital, class and class. . . . The crisis is fundamentally a moral one. The nations must rearm morally. . . . Imagine a rising tide of absolute honesty and absolute unselfishness sweeping across every country. . . . A wave of absolute unselfishness throughout the nations would be the end of war.

In other words, if men would only be perfect, they would be perfect. This astounding idea fairly swept the British privileged groups off their feet — especially when they discovered that British airplanes were lacking. It was one of the impulses that impelled Mr. Chamberlain to Munich.

The manifestoes of the MP's, made public at the beginning of the Czechoslovak crisis, announced their conversion to the principles of the "crusade for Moral Rearmament which appears to be spreading rapidly." It all happened "at a recent dinner at the House of Commons in

honor of the founder of the Oxford Group and attended by members of both Houses of Parliament." A week later came the manifesto of Earl Baldwin and the other barons, asserting that "the real need of the day is Moral and Spiritual Rearmament." A week later, Bunny Austin, speaking with the political authority of a good tennis player, asked "that the youth of the world let their voices be heard in a call for the Moral Rearmament of the nations. . . ." He added, "That appeal has already been put forward by those of greater authority than myself. . . . As Herr Hitler has said, 'A great future lies before the youth of Germany. . . .'" Until the end of November manifesto after manifesto reiterated the "Moral Rearmament" slogan like the incantation of a magic formula.

The only variation on the theme came on November nineteenth, when the manifesto of Buchmanite journalists pledged them, in the interest of "a programme of Moral Rearmament," to observe "a discipline of expression in our professional dealings equal to that which we expect from a Minister of the Crown. . . ." In plain English, these journalists undertook not to write anything which might be uncomfortable for Mr. Chamberlain. Various rumors and revelations

about the Munich background were then gaining ground. The "discipline of expression" must be even more rigid now, after Moravia, Memel, and Albania.

II

A movement with such influence upon the makers of British public opinion and policy must have in its sources of appeal beyond those of the traditional religious "revival" with which "Buchmanism" has usually been confused. Actually it has almost nothing in common with the familiar revivalist movements. The difference lies in the character of the leader, in the methods employed, and in the social position of the converts.

The traditional evangelist has always been a strong personality, gifted of tongue and capable of moving vast crowds to emotional fervor. Frank Buchman is none of these things. Middle-sized and slightly rotund, bald and bespectacled, he would not attract attention on a casual meeting. The only mark of distinction which even his disciples have been able to discover is, in the much quoted words of Harold Begbie, "that mien of scrupulously shampooed and almost medical cleanliness so characteristic of the hygienic American." Supple-

menting this soapy appearance is the ingratiating and beamingly confident manner of a well-trained salesman for one of the better-class business firms. He claims to be on intimate terms with his employer. "I know that he is a personal god," he has said. "Look what he has done for me!" Without intellectual interests of any kind, but with remarkable concentration of purpose, he has devoted his entire energy to the single pursuit of spiritual salesmanship. Slow-witted but doggedly determined, he has built up a movement in which older religious techniques are adapted to modern advertising conditions.

Born in Pennsburg, Pennsylvania, of German-Swiss ancestry, Mr. Buchman was educated for the Lutheran ministry at Muhlenberg College and Mount Airy Lutheran Seminary. In his early environment he found the two religious traditions that have raised him to greatness. The Lutheran Church, which never broke away completely from its Catholic origin, retained auricular confession as a means of spiritual growth in the period before confirmation. And according to Quaker beliefs, with which every Pennsylvanian is familiar, it was possible for every man to obtain spiritual guidance from God by consulting the Light

Within. Through combining these two essentially antagonistic principles, as no one with a logical mind could have done, and vulgarizing both of them in subjection to salesmanship needs, Mr. Buchman was at last able to cross-breed the exotic flower of "Buchmanism."

But it was a long process. For the first forty-three years of his life Buchman led an undistinguished existence as a small-town Lutheran minister and college YMCA secretary. This long preparation was illuminated by but one glowing experience. At the appropriate age of 30, he enjoyed a vision of Christ on the Cross which produced in him, he says, "a dazed sense of a great spiritual shaking-up" so great that he succeeded shortly after in converting a young college student who "went to church that night, became a good Christian, and later a successful barrister."

By 1921 Mr. Buchman had formulated his program. Fortified by faith and the right introductions, he went to Oxford and gathered about him small groups of students in the two aristocratic colleges of Corpus Christi and Christ's. (He kept away from intellectual Balliol.) To them, in highly select "religious house-parties," he revealed the great principles of "Sharing" and "Guidance."

"Sharing" was the old Catholic-Lutheran principle of private confession transmogrified by having the confessions made in the presence of the whole group. Naturally, considering the age of the penitents, most of the confessions had to do with matters of sex, and the sharing came down to erotic excitement. The public "Wash-out," as Buchmanian jargon called it, was piously supposed to prevent any future return of sinful desire. After the "Washout" came "Guidance" obtained in "the Quiet Time" by "Listening-in to God" or conducting "Two-Way Radio Chats" with Him. These pleasant chats could be had either in private sessions with F. B. — as Mr. Buchman liked to be called — or in larger group meetings. The technique is fully described by a devout disciple, A. J. Russell, in his *For Sinners Only*:

Then, of course, Frank suggested the inevitable Quiet Time. Taking two sheets of notepaper, he handed me one. We sat down and listened in prayerful silence. . . . Nothing exceptional came; quite a lot of ordinary human thoughts, but no luminous ones. . . . I wrote down my thoughts; then read them aloud to Frank, who confidently and surprisingly pronounced them to be God's thoughts.

When the disciple has been properly washed-out and guided, he is able to enjoy the personal com-

panionship of the deity ever after. As another convert, V. C. Kitchen, says in his *I Was a Pagan*, "I 'emerged' into God-consciousness all at once." The proof of it? During his unregenerate pagan period Mr. Kitchen had been a most sinful smoker and drinker, but he now never downed a drop or puffed the tiniest puff; he had been in the habit of quarreling with his wife, but now no harsh word passed his lips; he had made a practice of defrauding his partner in an advertising firm by padding his expense account, but he now wrote out a check to him in full restitution. Then "miracles began to happen." God "guided me to the discovery of a check I had folded up, put away and forgotten — made out to me for the exact amount He had guided me to give my partner." Further miracles, too, were forthcoming:

One day . . . God guided me to write a plan for advertising transatlantic steamship travel. It was a branch of advertising in which I had had no experience and a subject I knew nothing about. I asked for God's help in the matter and almost immediately a complete and original plan came to my mind. . . . At another time . . . God guided me to make a certain investment. . . .

To F. B. himself, in the Quiet Time, God has suggested a remarkable series of slogans:

*The Four Absolutes — Absolute Purity,
Absolute Honesty, Absolute Love, and
Absolute Unselfishness.*

Sin Blinds and Sin Binds.

*Jesus Christ still Suits, Saves, and
Satisfies.*

*P-R-A-Y stands for Powerful Radio-
grams Always Yours.*

*A Supernatural Network Over Live
Wires.*

*A Spiritual Radiophone in Every Home.
God has a Plan for Every Man.*

The vulgarity and lack of intellectual content in the Buchmanite parody of religion limited F. B.'s Oxford following in the early days to less than 5 per cent of the students, and in 1924 he decided to shift his attack to America. At that time no Oxford sponsorship was claimed for the movement. Invitations to the Buchmanite gatherings in New York were given simply in the name of "The Groups: A First Century Christian Fellowship," meeting at the Hotel Plaza. The likeness to First Century Christianity consisted, of course, in the common devotion to the principles of "Sharing" and "Guidance." The First Century Christians shared their little property and were guided to persecution and death; their Twentieth Century followers shared their little erotic excitements and were guided to the Hotel Plaza.

F. B.'s most devoted American follower, the Reverend Samuel Shoemaker, an Episcopal clergyman, had formerly been secretary of the

Philadelphia Society at Princeton. This organization, virtually a local branch of the YMCA, was comfortably housed in a handsome Gothic building guarded by Daniel Chester French's statue of "The Christian Student" — a stargazing youth doubly armed with a football and Bible. The society was easily persuaded to invite Mr. Buchman to Princeton.

The results of this first incursion were somewhat disappointing; only a few sheepish sheep were gathered into the fold. But after more adequate preparatory propaganda, Mr. Buchman launched a second Princeton campaign in 1926. There were the usual "religious house parties" and erotic confessions. Without winning many actual converts, the Buchmanites did succeed in making themselves a public nuisance. They were denounced in the *Princetonian*, and the students decided, by a large majority of those voting, that "Buchmanism in any form" ought not to be connected with any religious organization in the University. In defense of his activities, Mr. Buchman is said to have told President Hibben that 95 per cent of the students were addicted to one or another form of sex perversion. But the President, at whatever cost to free speech, banished Mr. Buchman from the

Princeton campus. Joyous undergraduates gave the "Christian Student" a fine coat of gilding, and finally pulled him off his pedestal.

By the time he departed once more for England, Mr. Buchman was guided to seek his converts less among sex-morbid college students than among those college and community leaders who were most conscious of failure and impotence. "Stress Slogans, Not Sex," said the alliterative Voice Within. The shift in policy soon brought results. Mr. Buchman always had a fondness for men in key positions, but to gain their adherence was now the central point in his program. His godly "boring from within" to win over the people of influence and importance was very similar in method, however different the ultimate aim, from that used by Nazis and communists. And it worked even better in the highly class-conscious groups of society to which he addressed his efforts. "Snob appeal" was on his side. Every distinguished convert brought half a dozen others in his train. Old friends in high positions gained the courage to come out openly in his support, and new friends of still higher position were won over: Dr. Streeter, the Provost of Queen's College in Oxford; Dr. Geoffrey Allen, Fellow and Chaplain of Lin-

coln College; Dr. P. S. Allen, President of Corpus Christi College; Julian Thornton-Duesberry, its chaplain; Loudon Hamilton, ex-master of Eton; Howard Rose, priest of St. Peter-le Bailey; Dr. Grensted, professor of the Philosophy of Christian Religion. With such names enrolled, the Buchmanites felt themselves justified in ceasing to be merely a "first century Christian brotherhood" and becoming "The Oxford Group Movement," though legally they were denied the right to use the title — an attempt to incorporate under it being refused by the authorities.

Legal or not, the new name helped greatly. With the prestige of Oxford behind him, Howard Rose led a "team" of fifteen Buchmanite missionaries to Holland in 1927 and another team of seven to South Africa in 1928. In 1930, the Reverend J. W. Margetson, Provost of St. Mary's Cathedral, welcomed a team of fifty to Edinburgh. In 1933 F. B. himself brought a team of sixty with him in one more attempt to conquer his native land. The Oxonians secured a crowd of 2300 curiosity seekers at their spiritual mass meeting in the Waldorf Astoria, but they obtained few distinguished American sponsors besides Bishop Manning and William Gilliland, an 84-year-

old ex-bootlegger, known in his profession as "Bill Pickle." Mr. Buchman discussed the Depression and gave his solution:

The President's social trends report indicates there will surely be a revolution in this country. We are going to make it a spiritual revolution. What hunger marchers need is to be "changed."

There followed a much-advertised house party at Briarcliff Manor and a quick transcontinental trip.

On his return to England, his welcome was almost a royal one. The Archbishop of Canterbury gave a reception for him, and the Lord Mayor of London another. In the spiritual week-end that followed in London fully 5000 people took part, with representatives from forty nations among them. Henceforward, Frank Buchman's position was established as one of the pillars of the British Empire.

III

Since the movement has not been organized as a separate sect, but represents itself to be an interdenominational revival of spiritual energy throughout the Protestant Church, accurate statistics as to the number of Buchmanites in the world are quite unavailable. The center of their strength is in England; they have made some

headway in South Africa and in Canada; their "teams" have been enthusiastically received in Norway, Denmark, and Holland, and they claim to have missionaries in sixty countries; the only great nations left uninvaded are Russia, Germany, and Italy, which have new religions of their own. Probably at least 100,000 individuals have at one time or another been present at Buchmanite "house parties," but this estimate is somewhat invalidated by the number of "repeaters" included. The Buchmanites themselves have rather carefully refrained from compiling lists of conversions, relapses, or reconversions. The importance of the movement is not to be judged by its numbers but by the social position of its devotees.

Obviously Buchmanism matches, for certain people, the emotional needs of our day. The lingering belief in a Special Providence — a deity intervening in the details of human affairs — may be made to seem plausible when these humans profess to desire only such universal goods as absolute honesty, unselfishness, love, and the preservation of peace. Through its doctrine of "Guidance," Buchmanism has reinstated the idea of Special Prov-

idence just at the time when it was being abandoned by most of the orthodox churches. The emotional relief obtained by transferring human burdens to the shoulders of deity is naturally great. In the present period of world catastrophe it is not surprising that Buchmanism flourishes to the degree it does.

This explains, also, why the reception of Buchmanism has been so different in America and in England. American statesmen and businessmen are far from convinced that they are through; their energy is still strong; they still have abundant faith in themselves and are little disposed to trust the solution of their problems entirely to God and Frank Buchman. But the ruling aristocracy of Great Britain is tired and ready to welcome a philosophy of escape.

In the mid-Nineteenth Century a noted English clergyman and writer, Charles Kingsley, declared in the bitterness of his heart that the Christian churches had so far forgotten Christ's message of social justice that religion had become little more than "an opiate for the masses." It was left for Frank Buchman, in a further stage of decadence, to turn religion into an opiate for the classes.

MISDEAL

A Story

BY ANDRÉ MAUROIS

Now you are back in France, dear friend, and an ocean separates us. This gives me courage to write you. You hadn't noticed, at least I hope not, that your stay here was a fairly unhappy little episode for me. As long as you were in New York, I wouldn't have dared tell you about my pitiful little disappointment. Now I think telling it will relieve me.

Do you remember the letters you wrote me before coming to America? I suppose you have forgotten them. They are on my table at this very moment. They are enthusiastic and charming. You had just published your first book, but you were not yet known in this country. You had read the two articles I wrote about you. I think they gave you genuine pleasure. You told me, "No masculine critic has written about this novel the profound, fine things it inspired in you. Only a woman could describe the character of Clarissa with so much penetration. . . .

It is for readers such as you that one writes!" After the second article, in which I had tried to analyze not only your work but, by reading between the lines, your character, you told me, "I cannot imagine a greater pleasure than talking with you some day about the books we both love. The authors you mention are those I most admire; what you say of them is also what I think. What evenings we could have together talking about our mutual friends, of Merimée, of Chekhov, of Foerster, and of delightful Katherine Mansfield."

I don't believe you can imagine what these sentences, to you probably banal and polite, meant to me. You don't know what my life is. I live with my parents who are booksellers of modest means, in a middle-class section of New York. The apartment is homely, somber, and furnished in the style of the 'nineties. My room has plain, one-colored white walls with two or three photographs on them,

one of them yours. I bought it so I wouldn't have to ask you for it.

It is my mother to whom I owe my taste for books. When I started to write she helped and encouraged me. I tell you this because you might wonder why I still live with my parents, since I earn quite a comfortable living contributing to newspapers. It is partly from gratitude, and partly through fear of being lonely, because I am really a very solitary person. That will surprise you also. In New York you must have heard that I had a host of friends. That's true, but with none of them do I have any real intimacy.

Am I homely? I often look at myself in the mirror. My face is too round; my mouth is a little weak; and my nostrils are too large; my eyes seem — oh! not beautiful, but perhaps you can find an indulgent adjective; I've just crossed out three, one after the other. I think I would have made either a pleasant wife or companion for a man, perhaps jealous, but certainly faithful and loyal. No man of my acquaintance hoped for that much from me, at least none I would have chosen for myself.

Perhaps you realize more clearly what your arrival in New York meant? You were the type of man

I thought best suited to understand me. Everything brought us together, identity of taste and sympathy born of my admiration for your books. You scarcely knew anyone here besides myself; it was I who made you come and who arranged your lectures at the School. I gave you serious, weighty, and noble arguments in order to obtain your consent; the true reason was simply that I wanted you all to myself for several weeks. If you knew with what love — it's strange, but 3000 miles away I am no longer afraid of words — I prepared for your visit! I had seen all the current plays in order to choose which might amuse you most; I took French lessons to improve my accent. And finally I made arrangements to have you stay with Harriet Benson.

It was at the last minute that I made this decision. I had reserved an apartment for you at a hotel, but eight days before your arrival I was spending the evening with Harriet (who was my best friend in college and who remained so after a brilliant marriage), and suddenly, looking at that perfect house, almost too perfect, admiring those pictures (I knew you liked Degas and Renoir), and above all studying Harriet, who reminded me so much of the heroines of your

novels, I told myself, "It is here, naturally, that he ought to live." In five minutes I had obtained Harriet's consent to offer you a room in her house.

Do you remember getting off the boat onto the pier? I had come with Harriet, and long before the gangplank was lowered, I recognized you. My heart was beating. That was silly, since I didn't know you, but it's a fact; I love facts. Naturally you couldn't recognize me, but the minute you put your foot on American soil we approached you. We spoke a few words, every one of which I could repeat to you even now. You spoke of the boat, the trip, your first impressions. But after that, I hardly listened. I was only interested in the glance that you exchanged with Harriet. Doubtless neither of you was conscious of it, but for me, passionate spectator, that look contained the whole future. "Now it's done," I thought bitterly. "Between them they have formed a friendship, or rather a complicity; I don't know what sort of silent understanding. Oh! what a fool I've been."

What a fool I really was. Just when I had hoped to keep you for myself, to enjoy the smallest minutes of your visit, I had you meet, in the first second, a woman

a hundred times more beautiful and a hundred times more charming than I. I even had you stay at her house. I gave you to her. I showed her to you surrounded by all the prestige of her money and her taste. You will never know how bitter that long ride in Harriet's car from the dock to her house was for me. I looked at her dress and at mine. Hers was simpler, since I had gone to great expense to please you; but I knew that you found hers perfect and didn't see mine. I was silent, but you didn't notice that either. You and Harriet didn't say anything of consequence, but you both seemed excited and happy. I understood that the game was lost before even starting it.

Did you notice that during your entire stay you scarcely saw me? I think not. You used to pass your days with Harriet. Evenings you went to the theatre with her, and sometimes with her husband. Saturdays you left town for week-ends in their Long Island home. Sometimes, since you are naturally polite, you used to say, "We ought to invite Ida," and Harriet would telephone me very affectionately. I always refused. I found excuses, and I used to invent engagements and work to be done. You both thought my excuses very natural, or more exactly, you didn't even

take the trouble to think about them at all. You had performed your duties of courtesy and friendship. You had a great time together. You were happy alone, and happiness is a nonchalant egoist.

Hence I disappeared during those four weeks. I vanished from your life. And on the last day, when I came to take you to the boat, I was so natural and smiling that I think you suspected nothing. Today, distance having made this unhappy adventure seem unreal and almost fictitious, I should like to try to plead my case with you.

II

It isn't such a bad case. If you had taken the trouble to talk with me, to reassure me, to tame me, I think that you would have found possibilities in me, reserves of sentiment, observations that might have surprised you. I think that, to the writer you are, to the novelist you should be, I could have brought much more than Harriet. Don't think I am trying now by any feminine device (but am I feminine?) to destroy the image of my friend. I admire Harriet a lot; I find her delightful to look at, and for a woman of the world she is still amazingly "fresh" and sincerely curious about culture.

But just because she is beautiful and rich, and because she has too much success, Harriet hasn't the time to sound the depths of friendship. She skims over the surface of sentiments and ideas. Oh, she skims with infinite grace, but should a man like you be content with such superficial charm? Don't you hope for something more serious and penetrating sometimes? In reading your books, I had often thought that you, surely more than other men, would be capable of silence, of contemplation, and of that long quest done together, which ought to be, I think, the basis for real friendship. I still believe I was capable of giving you that kind of friendship.

You men are strange. You dominate us and surpass us by the force of your thought. You understand, construct, explain. You have more style and more vigor than we, but as soon as it is a question of judging women, we are a hundred times more discerning than you. Once more, you must not feel that I want to blame you for preferring Harriet to me. About her, I agree (or almost agree) with you; it's not a question of her. Perhaps she is worth more than you know, for you encouraged her during your entire visit to show a childish and useless side which is part of her

nature, but not the only part.

No, it isn't Harriet, or even you personally that I quarrel with at this moment, but rather all men, always attracted more by a beautiful face, a well-cut dress, and nicely arranged hair than by a soul worthy of attracting you. Who is it you love, then? A hairdresser? A dress-maker? A manicurist? A beauty parlor? Aren't you capable of discovering beneath a little less perfect exterior, promises of happiness? We women are not like that. Men who have had the greatest success in love — were they always the most handsome, the best dressed, the most famous? Not at all. We know, it seems to me, how to ferret out and reward strength and genius under all their guises. We are not the slaves of a tailor,

nor of a banker. We love people and not appearances. While you . . .

But I let myself go in ridiculous complaints. I am wrong, and I ask your indulgence. This isn't at all what I wanted to write you. What I had hoped to tell you was that a poor girl made a holiday of your coming, that she has been very unhappy for a month, and that now she has regained her senses. She asks nothing of you, except that you think of her with friendship and sometimes, for the sake of her love, cast a more curious and more penetrating glance on the women whom at first sight you judge as without beauty. You will see, my friend — you, to whom so many others have caused suffering — with how much pleasure they will repay you for your trouble.



FOOL'S WEALTH

BY EDGAR DANIEL KRAMER

I WOULD buy bread
And wine to sup
With the gold I plucked
From a buttercup.

I would buy clothes
And shelter, too,
With the silver I found
In the gleaming dew.

Men laugh and jeer
When they see my face,
And drive me away
From the market-place.

THE *GENERAL SLOCUM* DISASTER

By ALAN MACDONALD

IN New York City the morning of June 15, 1904 was serene and cool. Down in the Harbor the SS. *General Slocum*, a big white excursion steamer, rode at a Hudson River dock, and as the crew washed her that morning she gleamed like a swan in a pond. The *Slocum* was a side-wheeler, 250 feet long, three decks high, and licensed to carry 2500 passengers. Advertised as the finest excursion-boat in the Harbor, she was insured for \$70,000, more than half her cost. She was thirteen years old — young for a ship — and had recently been refurbished and repaired.

Walter Payne, a Negro porter, was one of the men engaged in preparing her for the day's excursion. His first task was to fill the *Slocum's* fifteen or twenty lamps. In the daytime these were kept in a little cabin at the end of a companion-way off the starboard side of the main deck, called the "second cabin down in the hold". This morning Payne found the cabin lighted with a lurid glare, for a mechanic with an open oil-torch was tinkering

with a nearby engine. Payne lighted his pipe, throwing the match on a bench. Then he lighted a lamp to work by and began his job. Around him as he worked in that cabin, where there was no rule against smoking or fire, was a miscellaneous collection of nautical impedimenta and junk: a dynamo; the steam steering-gear, for the cabin was directly under the pilot house; two barrels of cylinder oil; a barrel of mineral sperm and a barrel of machine oil; paint pots, life preservers, paddle buckets, camp stools, old hose, two bags of charcoal, and three barrels of beer glasses, packed in hay.

His lamps filled, the Negro went up on deck and found that the *Slocum* was under way, bound around the Battery and up the East River to the city recreation pier at the foot of Third Street. There she was to take on the 1358 persons — more than 750 of them babies and children — who were going to Locust Grove, Long Island, on the annual outing of St. Mark's Lutheran Evangelical Church, at

Sixth Street on the lower East Side. The *Slocum* arrived at the pier at about 8:20, and for an hour the wives and children of the thrifty St. Mark's Germans streamed aboard. The fifteen waiters for the bar, dining room, and deck service were on hand, and the ten-piece German band. After a beer or two, the band took up its position on the promenade deck and began to play.

As the crowd assembled, two men watched with particular concern. They were St. Mark's youthful pastor, the Reverend George C. F. Haas, and the sixty-three-year-old ship's master, William H. Van Schaick, forty years a licensed pilot and thirty a master. Near the pastor stood William Pullman, treasurer of the church, who had paid \$350 for the use of the *Slocum* that day. Captain Van Schaick stood on the hurricane deck, by the pilot house. He was a tall, well-built old man in a black frock coat, white collar, and black bow tie, the only sign of his authority being a vizored cap. He had icy, staring eyes, and looked bored and weary.

At 9:30 the mate reported that everyone was aboard. The Captain gave the word and the *General Slocum*—beer flowing in the bar, chowder cooking in the galley, clams being fried and served—cast off.

II

First-Pilot Ed Van Woert held the wheel until the *Slocum* reached the entrance to Hell Gate, opposite Ninety-second Street. Here, in obedience to an old tradition, the master entered the wheelhouse. Under his eye, if not his hand, the white ship paddled serenely up the East River.

But suddenly a thin black cloud puffed up the port side of the vessel, just forward of the pilot house. Apparently it passed unnoticed, except for two boys who saw the smoke and spoke to Captain Van Schaick. To the first one, the captain gruffed, "No danger—boilers." The second angered him by entering the wheelhouse and was ordered to get the hell out and mind his own business.

In the meantime another boy had appeared at the entrance to the bar on the main deck, where John J. Coakley, a deck-hand who had been on the *Slocum* for only eight days, was having a beer. The boy ran to him and whispered breathlessly, "There's a fire down that stairway." Coakley ran to the cabin where the Negro had filled the lamps, and found it filled with thick, black smoke. Through it he saw flames rising from the hay in which the glasses had been packed.

Coughing and choking, Coakley tried to smother the fire with canvas, but this was too cumbersome. He next seized the bags of charcoal and threw them on the flames. Then, thoroughly unnerved, he ran to the deck in search of the mate, yelling "Fire, fire," like the sea-tyro he was.

Mate Flanagan, an iron worker by trade who did not have a mate's license, ordered Coakley to unreel the hose on the main deck and then ran to the engine room, where he ordered the engineer to begin pumping water into the stand-pipe. On deck Coakley and some others had succeeded in straightening out the hose, but when the water surged into it the hose burst like an over-filled sausage. Later investigation proved that it was linen — one of the captain's economies. Deckhands next brought up a rubber hose used to wash decks, but they could not remove the first hose; the coupling was rusted solid. The nozzle of the linen hose was abandoned four feet from the entrance to the cabin, and water flowed uselessly from the pipe.

Meanwhile the mate had called up the speaking tube to the pilot house. Pilot Van Woert heard him say, "She's afire, Cap'n Ed," and told Van Schaick. The old man trembled; he reached forward and

signaled the engine room, ordering a full stop. But then he caught himself and gave the signal for full speed ahead. "Keep her on her course till I look into this," he said to his pilot, and went out. In a moment he was back; the flames had met him on the stairway to the deck below. "She's gone, Ed," he said, "we must beach her on North Brother Island as quick as we can." North Brother Island, from that point, was a good two and three quarter miles; to this day veteran masters and pilots wonder why Van Schaick did not beach the *Slocum* along the Bronx shore or on Little Hell Gate Island, where there were mud flats. Reluctantly, they admit it was a mistake of judgment to try to reach North Brother. Yet Captain Van Schaick held steadfastly to his course, as though the smoke and fire were spray across his bow. He did not sound the alarm for the help that was a stone's throw away on either shore, nor did he do anything to rally his disorganized crew. While passengers begged him to put into shore, he stood silently in the prow of the boat, as far away as possible from the fire.

The *Slocum* burned like well-oiled tinder. While the crew struggled with the hose, the thin smoke-puffs became dense black clouds.

In great gusts the smoke was swept back across the decks; thick coils eddied around the lower deck space, driving the choking passengers in a great crush to the stern. Two or three of the crew braved the smoke to tear down the racks that held life-preservers, only to find that they were worse than useless — straps broke, canvas tore, and pulverized cork spewed out on the deck. Others found the fire buckets empty and the lifeboats so rusted in the davits that only an expert, with time and tools, could possibly release them.

Off 129th Street the first flames shot above the decks, but still the *Slocum* gave no alarm. The fire was seen, however, from a dredge at Lawrence Point, Astoria, and the signal was sounded from there. Four tugboats nearby heard it and set out after the burning ship. At the same time a policeman on Randall's Island telephoned headquarters, and shortly craft of all kinds set out in the wake of the *Slocum*.

The flames increased. Off 132nd Street, about a mile from North Brother, they raged ten or twelve feet above the top deck. The passengers faced the alternatives of probable death on the burning ship or possible escape by a jump into the tide-riven waters below. In the

bow and stern all who could climbed over the rails, caught their toes on the two-inch extension of the deck, and hung over the water. One of the passengers whose clothing was on fire leaped into the river at 133rd Street. Immediately scores of others followed him, to be whirled to death inside the paddles or left struggling in the *Slocum's* wake — about one in ten of them saved. Off 140th Street the forward rail, to which the desperate passengers were clinging like flies, gave way and hurled them into the water just forward of the port paddle. Only a few slipped through. On the decks the passengers were completely trapped; everywhere they were scorched by the terrific heat or choked by the smoke. The burning boat offered no refuge from fire, and the waters below were already full of the dead and drowning. Then, as the *Slocum* finally approached North Brother, the wind let go full force, and the terrified crowd saw a huge wall of fire coming. They pressed back toward the starboard rail, crowding scores into the water and others to death. The ship grounded with a shudder, and the whole starboard side of the hurricane deck collapsed, throwing hundreds more into the river and the fire. It was estimated that four hundred died here.

III

With the *Slocum* beached at last, all the rescue forces converged. On North Brother, Dr. William Watson had put the patients of the Island's contagious-disease hospital under lock and guard, and waited on the beach with doctors and supplies. The fleet of tugs, launches, and rowboats rushed in. Fire-boats and fire-apparatus from the shore began to throw water on the burning vessel, but it had no effect. The heat was so intense that rescue boats could not get alongside to take off survivors; heat scorched the faces of the crews and set fire to the paint. On the starboard side the water churned with women and children, struggling, shrieking, drowning, clinging to paddles, ducking faces and heads in order to stand the searing heat waves from above. Rowboats skirted the mass, pulling in those who still lived and tossing back the dead. Boats that went close were overturned when too many tried to clamber aboard. Rescuers who dove into the water—the water was thirty feet deep to a point ahead of the paddle house—found themselves entangled in the arms and legs of the victims. Running the gauntlet of the heat and the gusts of fire, tugs at last began to

close in on the *Slocum*, while their crews shouted to those aboard, "Jump, jump." Dozens did jump; some landed safely on the tugs, others struck stanchions and bars or missed the boats and were drowned.

Within ten minutes of beaching, all life had been driven or burned from the *Slocum*. She rocked there, almost at right angles to the narrow, shelving beach, burning furiously, enveloped from stem to stern, flames leaping sixty feet in the sunlight. Later, burned out at last, the smoldering hulk drifted north to the flats off Hunts Point, where she sank; and divers began to bring up body after body from her paddle houses and lower decks. For ten days the search for bodies went on, ending only after a search of all the coves from Staten Island to Throgg's Neck. The tides carried some a dozen miles.

The half-mile square community of which St. Mark's was the center heard of the disaster through newspaper extras. Those who had remained in the parish rushed to the church or to the Bronx, where they lined the piers opposite North Brother. The church posted great bulletins of the dead and missing, and almost all night Sixth Street between First and Second Avenues was impassable. Every now and

then the grief-stricken crowds broke into the hymn, *Ein Feste Burg Ist Unser Gott*. The death toll was terrible; 600 families were represented on the *Slocum* and all lost one or more members, or were wiped out entirely. Of the 955 dead, all but a few dozen were members of a congregation which numbered about 1200 souls.

When the *Slocum* struck the North Brother shore Captain Van Schaick leaped off the bow into the shallow water. One side of his face was so burned that one eye was dimmed forever, and he split a heel on a submerged rock. Later he was arrested and held criminally responsible for the disaster. President Roosevelt shook up the steamboat-inspection service, ousting two inspectors and eight assist-

ants, and ordered a re-inspection of all the excursion boats in the harbor. Van Schaick was tried for manslaughter and sentenced to ten years in prison. In the hospital his plight and his silence under criticism touched the heart of a nurse thirty years his junior, and on the eve of his prison term she married him. Twice President Roosevelt refused her pleas for a pardon, but on Christmas Day, 1912, Van Schaick was pardoned by President Taft. Harbor captains, pilots, and nurses raised a fund of \$6400 and bought him a farm near Amsterdam, New York. He and his wife went there to live, but in a year or two she left him because, she said, of his cruelty. He died in 1927 at the Masonic home in Utica—alone.



DICTATORSHIP

For Cronos knew that no human nature invested with supreme power is able to order human affairs and not overflow with insolence and wrong. — Plato, *Laws*, Ch. IV

DON'T BE YOUR OWN ARCHITECT!

BY ROGER BURLINGAME

I KNOW that a resolve is much like a button on a fat man's coat — to button it is to undo three others. Nevertheless I have made one resolve that is flat and final and will last as long, I hope, as I do: I shall never again undertake any kind of construction without first hiring an expert.

I know that there are folk who despise the services of experts, who hark nostalgically back to their jack-of-all-trades ancestors. To them architects and such specialists are parasites, luxuries, superfluous agents who reap large profits out of a job that any normal, intelligent person could do for himself. That, in the country, is the popular belief — an architect is an exceedingly high-hat young man who makes pretty sketches, produces elaborate blue-prints, and makes you buy innumerable things you do not want. He orders all the most expensive equipment; not from a good mail-order house, but from big, fancy concerns. He probably gets a rake-off from the manufacturer on every item, and it is

you who pay, through the nose. . . . Those are the theories. My bitter experience does not substantiate them. And this same bitter experience has proved to me that ours is, beyond a doubt, an age of experts.

I came to the country after a life of city-living, and many burdens dropped from my shoulders. I was free, secure, no revolution could get me. I had bought an old house full of tradition and surrounded by fertile soil. There was abundant water. It was beautiful.

My wife and I did not want to go primitive — at least not all the way. We had work to do and we conceded the value of electricity, plumbing, and even oil burners. But, we thought, it is silly to pay a lot of money for those things; they can all be done very cheaply, if only we put a little thought into our remodeling and work it out bit by bit. We were in no hurry. We had lots of catalogs, in which the prices of sinks, bathtubs, stoves, pumps, heating plants, and

other units were quite remarkable. We would shop around until we found what we wanted and then buy it; in that way we would acquire a special affection for each little thing. And, finally, what a bulge we should have on our expensive neighbors who had put themselves into the hands of architects and contractors!

We were very clever about it. We began by making friends with the local people. We flattered ourselves that we got along very well with the natives because we regarded them as our equals, if not, indeed, our superiors. I began by going regularly to a roadside beer garden where I knew the artisans of the countryside gathered after the day's work. The bartender was highly co-operative. He would point out a mason, a carpenter, a plumber in the crowd and I would invite him to have a beer with me. I took a lot of time over this and had some good talks about democracy, communism, crop control, the machine age, local government, the birth rate, brewing, Prohibition, and the double standard of sex morality. It ended by my making many appointments, and soon many specimens of automotive archeology were rattling up the rubble of my driveway. Though I had carefully spaced the meetings

with my various new friends, they all arrived at once — at a moment, I suppose, when a general depression had struck the countryside. I held separate conferences with each while the others looked at the view. The general silence was remarkable.

The plumber was a charming man who frankly told me that he would do our jobs as soon as he finished with some more important work he was doing for a contractor somewhere else. The carpenter and mason would be glad to come as soon as the plumber got out of the way. But the plumber could do nothing until the others had finished, and there were actually moments when the technical exigencies required the work of all three in close conjunction! During the following week they sent in their figures and I must admit they were unexpectedly low — for a while we were the envy of all our extravagant friends. Then the equipment from the mail-order houses (which I had insisted on, instead of letting the artisans work through their own proper channels) did not arrive. Then parts of it arrived and others did not. Then slowly — oh, how slowly! — the work began.

In the course of that summer I fired three men, stopped one fist fight, and failed to stop another. Of the jobs my workmen friends

did, I have since replaced one septic tank twice, another once, a pump twice, a heating unit once, a hot-water system twice, one complete sewage disposal system three times, and, judging from the noises which alarm us each day, there is much yet to be done. . . . But through that summer I retained my faith in the local artisans.

II

Sometime later our little farmhouse got too small for our needs, and I decided to build a small additional guest house, cottage, or, as my wife grandly termed it, "lodge." Someone suggested an architect and I laughed. An architect for a house 26 x 30? My wife and I were architects enough for that. So we drew up a pretty set of plans and telephoned for the carpenter. He was delighted with the plans, explained that he was a builder and, indeed, contractor as well, and was accustomed to this kind of job. I winced when he said "contractor"; I told him I did not believe in contracts, that I was friendly with many local artisans and that if he would do the woodwork, I would find my own masons, electricians, plumbers, and so on. He made me an estimate and I was delighted with it. Hav-

ing been my own architect, I then became my own contractor.

It was autumn, an unpropitious time to begin a house. Nevertheless each assured me he could get his job done before the freezing weather. I spent days on the telephone reassuring myself about this. I got good, reasonable estimates. The mason came and began to excavate. He worked magnificently while I stood and watched, thinking of all I was saving by dodging the architect and the contractor. Then it happened that I was given a difficult and exacting job in my own professional field which would keep me away from home a good deal of the time. So I started off gaily, after securing from my artisans a number of solemn promises.

Three weeks later I came home to find the excavation a desert; it was, that is, totally uninhabited. I telephoned my men and found they were out on other jobs. When I finally got the mason he told me he had arrived at a point where he could not proceed without the carpenter; the carpenter had the plans. I asked him if he had tried to reach the carpenter. The question astonished him. My friend had a telephone in his house only so that the rich and great might call him. He rarely called anyone

except in cases of illness or, as I learned later, financial stringency. The carpenter, it appeared, was waiting patiently to be told when we were ready for him. Direct liaison between these people does not exist; they depend upon a central co-ordinator. I resolved then to stay at home — or at least to come home every night until things were under way.

I then discovered another aspect of this business. Everything ran smoothly for a week or so. My own job had reached a phase where I could work at home. Thus I could go out every few hours and look at my house. The work was going on in what appeared an orderly way. I engaged an electrician and a plumber to come at whatever time the others were ready for them. Abruptly, one day, no one appeared. For a full week none of them could be reached at all. Abandoning the telephone, I drove to their houses. Frightened children stared at me, inarticulate; if they could be induced to speak they told me that dad and momma were away, they had no idea where. If momma was present she told me that her man was twenty miles away. This presented a vivid picture of how our modern civilization has decentralized the old-fashioned artisan.

They had quit, it developed, because neither the electrician nor the plumber had arrived when the job was ready for them. These gentlemen, when I asked them why, suggested that they were not clairvoyant. They were both surprised that I, being on the job continuously, had not told the plumber and the electrician precisely when to come. In other words, I was expected to have such an exact technical knowledge of the work that I would know to the minute the time for the entrance of each new technician. Now, of course, we must all wait for the thaw. And so the winter dragged through. . . .

But the most pointed example of my failure as an architect and contractor came when I installed my heating unit. I wanted, of course, the convenience of oil. One day I managed to corner my plumber long enough to discuss with him the cost of what, in my abysmal ignorance, I called an "oil-burning furnace." He covered acres of paper with figures and finally arrived at the conclusion that he could install this instrument for \$300. I asked him if this meant complete. Complete, he replied, to the last radiator. I agreed.

When the installation was finished, he presented his bill, which

was, to be sure, just \$300. But two days later a magnificent truck arrived and from it was unloaded a fine, new, shining, and exceedingly compact piece of machinery. The boss of this expedition presented me with a bill for \$250.

"For the oil burner," he said.

"But it's in!"

He looked alarmed at this, went into the cellar, and came back smiling.

"No," he said, "there's no oil burner there."

"Well, what is it, then, that my plumber installed?"

"Why that's the oil-burning furnace."

"But I understood it was complete."

"It is."

"Then what's this for?"

"This is the oil burner."

I got my plumber as quickly as possible; I made the matter appear so urgent that he came in something under a week. I explained the thing as calmly as I could, so as not to alarm him. I had agreed, I told him, to have an oil-burning furnace installed, complete, for \$300. Now, suddenly, it was to cost me \$550.

"No," he said. "I lived up to my agreement. I presented my bill. It agrees exactly with my estimate."

My plumber was an old friend.

He had read some of my books and, though I think he disapproved of them, he professed a certain admiration for my general ability and usefulness. "I hope," he said, "there hasn't been any misunderstanding." I talked and he talked. I said oil-burning furnace and he said oil-burning furnace. Then, at last, his eyes lighted. "Oh," he said. "Well, well, well." He laughed and he tried not to laugh. I'm afraid I got very mad. He did his best to quiet me.

"It just happens," he said, "that I never in my life met anybody who didn't know the difference between an oil burner and an oil-burning furnace. You see the furnace is a unit complete in itself. But you have to have an oil burner to make it work, just as you have somebody to shovel coal into a coal-burning furnace to make it work. This machine, you might say, shovels the oil into your oil-burning furnace. Well, well, well," he finished, "it's a funny world."

III

It isn't a funny world. I have since learned that. My 26 x 30 job cost me upward of \$7000. Counting the fee of a good architect and the reasonable profit of a good contractor, I believe \$2000 could

have been subtracted from the total. The job of remodeling the main house with plumbing, heating, wiring, and other accessories, counting replacements, cost some \$10,000. With a competent architect and contractor allowed to choose their own material and, under reasonable guidance, their own methods, I believe I might have cut \$3000 off this cost and had, to boot, a real sense of security in my structure and equipment.

Yes, the world may look funny to a man like my plumber when he meets someone like me — but not otherwise. It is an exceedingly well-ordered world, but it has, as I said, moved far beyond the grasp of the amateur. It is a world of well-trained specialists, each equal to his function but so necessarily absorbed in that function that he can have no time or space in his mind for outside matters.

The men who worked for me were right. In a society patterned on the machine, the units of that social scheme can no longer be expected to inform one another of their functions. Indeed, any such show of initiative on their part might be highly dangerous. The smooth working of our civilization depends upon extreme specialization. The mason must stick to masonry, the carpenter to car-

pentry. They must not step on one another's province, even to the extent of a telephone call. In a job such as my cottage they might have done this without disaster; but their training is based, as it should be, on more complex jobs. Just as the proper functioning of the cylinders of an internal-combustion engine depends on a proper timing mechanism, so must the proper functioning of artisans depend upon the co-ordinating mind of a co-ordinator.

In my maturer reflection on my building experiences, I do not, therefore, blame any of the willing artisans who worked for me. On the contrary: I believe I owe them an apology. If they took me for a ride, it was at my own bidding. If they were confused or disordered, haphazard or negligent, it was because they knew from the start that they were working for a man who had only the vaguest inkling of what he wanted done, and not even that much of any of the technics involved. They have given me, to be sure, a pretty liberal education in these matters, but there is not time enough left in my life to learn what the dullest architect has mastered in respect to a single one of the building trades. The information of experts and its instruments were patiently

perfected by centuries of laboriously accumulated knowledge.

Who am I, then, to attempt to co-ordinate work? How can I hope, alone, even to bring together the proper experts? The study of experts has become a technic in itself; it must be so. The specialist in my case — at least as far as my home life is concerned — is the architect. Another is the

contractor. Their fee, which looks so large on the first plans, goes to pay for a lifetime of study. From this sum you may deduct the loss of your own time and energy, plus the delay and disorder I have described. Let the good architect pick a good contractor and let the contractor pick his material. For they are experts in an experts' world.



THOUGHTS ON CURRENT DISCONTENTS

BY H. L. MENCKEN

DEMOCRACY is the art and science of running the circus from the monkey-cage.

*

A demagog's mind is a beautiful mechanism. It can think anything he asks it to think.

*

Syllogisms à la Mode: If you are against crooked labor leaders, you are against labor. If you are against packing the Supreme Court, you are in favor of letting Wall Street do it. If you are against communism, you are against democracy. If you are against the bench of bishops, you are against God. If

you are against trying a can of Old Dr. Quack's Salve on Uncle Sam, you are in favor of letting him die.

*

The smarter the politician, the more things he believes, and the less he believes any of them.

*

The believing mind reaches its perihelion in the so-called Liberals. They believe in each and every quack who sets up his booth on the fair-grounds, including the communists. The communists have some talent too, but they always fall short of believing in the Liberals.

► *College men take up Politics as a career,
making it almost a Learned Profession.*

EDUCATION FOR WARD-HEELERS

By WILL IRWIN

A YOUNG college graduate of my acquaintance saved a little money and used it for living expenses while he settled down in one of the most corrupt wards of his city. He took active charge of a boys' club at a settlement house. Through the boys, he has become acquainted with their parents. When his money ran out, he got a small job at city hall. "I'm building my own machine," he says privately. "Some day, I'm going to help clean up this town." A former all-American football star used his gridiron reputation to get an insignificant municipal job, joined his district political club, and is working up quietly. He is on his way. If the local boss knew his plans, and his ideals, he would be startled.

These young men represent something new and significant in American life. Hitherto our political machines have been largely manned by ward-heelers, of small education and few ideals. Now thousands of college students are deliberately preparing for careers

in partisan politics. They are taking special courses in government, in the history of political parties, in actual political technique. After graduation they are actually starting out at the bottom of the political ladder, working humbly but hopefully in the political clubs of their districts. The chances are that next election day one of them will ring your doorbell and urge you to vote. He'll be earning his spurs in that basic chore with which every aspiring political worker must make his start.

In a dozen large universities, deans and professors agree that the undergraduates headed for political careers probably outnumber those headed for business, which is a startling reversal within a decade. Many of the jobs these young people secure aren't political, ostensibly. Often they are minor civil-service posts. The point is that they don't plan to stay in that groove. The little clerkship is not to them a safe berth which will in the slow process of merit promotion lead to a third assistant deputy's job. It is

a means of earning a living while they serve their political apprenticeship in the district club and prepare to run for office.

You don't find that out from statistics, naturally, though there are some pertinent ones. For instance, 52 per cent of the liberal arts graduates of the University of Minnesota since 1929 are in public service; 40 per cent of the senators and representatives in the North Carolina legislature were former students of the state university, mostly in the political-science courses. But you find more convincing evidence of what is going on by visiting, as I did recently, a score of colleges and talking with professors and students. An astonishing and encouraging proportion of the undergraduates taking the courses in politics and public affairs say definitely that they intend to take an active part in the political game. When fifty-two students showed up this spring for a vocational guidance conference at the University of Michigan on "politics as a career" their earnestness was reflected in this recurrent question: "How can we make a living at the start?"

They were advised to follow the example of previous political-science graduates who have landed jobs as secretaries or assistant secre-

taries to mayors, Congressmen; or other office-holders. Here they can get a fine inside view of the machinery. Other students plan to enter politics through journalism. They are preparing for jobs on country weeklies or small dailies, which route is being recognized in the universities as a strategic avenue of approach and hence the departments of journalism and of political science are co-operating more closely.

But the greatest number of the aspiring apprentices to politics intend to follow that old, beaten path — the law. After all, the statesman without legal knowledge is incompletely educated for his job. And the young lawyer needs acquaintances in order to get clients. When he joins his political club, makes speeches for small-time candidates, or helps get out the vote, he is killing two or three birds with one stone. All this is a familiar pattern, of course, and it tends to perpetuate "government by lawyers." But many of these young lawyers are a new type, in that from college days they have been deliberately looking forward to politics, not for the sake of what they can get out of it but for the sake of what they can put into it. You have only to talk with them, as I have been doing, to realize that they have a spirit of

civic service that the political boss would deride, together with an incipient grasp of practical politics that may some day make the political boss sit up and take notice.

II

The training in politics offered by the universities nowadays is a mixture of theory and idealism with hard-boiled actuality and practical experience. Professors urge students to pick a party and align themselves with it. The University of Chicago uses the municipal elections as a laboratory. The state of Illinois puts into each voting place a neutral observer called a "deputy of the court," and as far back as 1924 the faculty persuaded Cook County to swear in a corps of students of political science as deputies. Distributed among the toughest wards, some students were slugged, some thrown out bodily. One, telephoning news of an irregularity to headquarters, glanced up to find a revolver pointed at his head. Chicago students still serve at every election, not only as deputies but as watchers for their parties. In fact, these days some of the watchers are co-eds.

Many of the professors themselves have varied their studies with a whirl at politics. Dr. Guy S.

Ford, president of the University of Minnesota and a teacher in the political courses, has had government administrative experience. Dean Joseph R. Hayden of Michigan served his turn as deputy governor of the Philippines under Frank Murphy. Almost all of the political-science faculty at Chicago has taken a hand in municipal politics. Columbia professors have been making, year after year, contributions to good government.

Politicians are constantly being called in to address college classes on methods for organizing the vote and "keeping the boys in line." They finish off by standing as targets for a volley of questions. The Carolina Union at the University of North Carolina is a shining example of this. The management is a corporation of about thirty students chosen for their brilliance in the social sciences. Fortnightly during the open season for politicians, some leader of local, state, or national politics addresses a meeting of students and townsfolk. After he has finished, he submits to an hour of questions. Earl Browder, communist, Norman Thomas, socialist, and John Hamilton, Republican, ran this gauntlet in one season. President Roosevelt also spoke, but in deference to his office the house asked him no questions.

Instances of men who studied for politics in college, and who are now playing good practical politics, tempered with ideals, are multiplying rapidly all over the country. They are only the vanguard; the great army of politically-minded graduates is still too young to have achieved elective office. But already, professors at Chicago, Syracuse, Iowa, and Michigan can point to numbers of their former students of political science who have served effectively in recent state legislatures. Others are in Congress. Many are municipal officials. One striking fact is the extraordinary number of young college alumni who are now serving as county chairmen — “county bosses,” if you will. Of these, one professor remarked, “A few have fallen into the rut of a political machine; the vast majority have not.”

Princeton, which was one of the first universities to make its politics courses vital, contemporary, and practical, points to spectacular results among its alumni: William H. Vanderbilt is Governor of Rhode Island, Prentice Cooper Governor of Tennessee; John G. Winant was

Governor of New Hampshire, and now fills a post at Geneva; Robert Rockwell is lieutenant governor of Colorado; John Harlan Amen is a special prosecutor conducting the spectacular clean-up of Brooklyn; Michael A. Feighan is minority leader of the Ohio General Assembly; and you can add a score of minor officials, including state assemblymen, mayors, and sheriffs.

The movement to get college-trained experts instead of political hacks into administrative jobs has gone so far that the battle may be said to be won. The colleges led that fight; it is clear now that they are leading another — the movement to leaven partisan politics with men especially educated for such a career. This is even more important to the nation. It is elected officials, not the experts in the bureaus, who make for us the choices between economy and bankruptcy, between fascism and democracy, between peace and war. Apparently the cap and gown are in politics to stay. Another generation or two, and politics may be recognized as one of the learned professions, like the law.



"PAINLESS" CHILDBIRTH

I. *A Mother Protests*

ANONYMOUS

IT IS MY conviction that mothers should be present when their children are born — and I'm not trying to be smart or shocking. I simply know that too many mothers are unconscious when the greatest event of their lives takes place. Misled by fear or sophistication, encouraged by easygoing doctors, or muddled by some allegedly painless quackery, they are content to be drugged and asleep when their offspring enter the world.

One hears so much about "educated modern mothers." Yet was there ever in history such an ignoramus as the "modern" woman who has borne a child in one of the "modern" ways? Her modernity may compass the latest wrinkle in child psychology, but it usually leaves out one minor element — Life. How many of today's mothers know just what goes on in childbirth, what a brand new baby looks like, how it is cared for in its first few minutes of existence, what the doctor does if there isn't that first

sharp, angry cry that announces a living child? How many, having had one child, would know what to do without medical aid if the second should send out storm warnings, or if they should be called in to help another mother in her moment of crisis? The keystone moment in the whole arch of human existence, and the begetter of life ignorant of the procedure! To me it seems fantastic.

I am not an old maid reading a lecture, or a one-chick-henny-penny telling the world that the sky fell down when I had my baby. I am the mother of four children, and I believe I know a good deal about childbirth. I was 21 when my first baby was born. The first pains set me a-thrill, as it does any normal mother. I was curious, impatient. I felt that I was about to witness and have the most important part in, the greatest of universal dramas. I felt close to the core of life. As my pain grew stronger I closed my eyes, breathed deeply and regu-

larly, pushed at each pain with all my strength, and thought in rhythmic little snatches, "My baby is coming! Will it be a boy? Will it be a girl? My baby is coming!"

It was a sort of exaltation. Consciously, eagerly, I was getting my first child into the world. And then, after the excruciating pangs, there he was in the world. I saw, as soon as the doctor did that it was a boy — messy but beautiful. My pain was forgotten in an instant. Who cared? That first full-lunged cry! No music was ever lovelier. When it was all over I said to the doctor — a little weakly, I suppose — "Next time I won't need you. I'll be able to do everything myself." I never really thought I'd have to.

My second child was due on a backwoods farm, a mile from a telephone, ten miles from a doctor, and that on a road that had never been attempted by automobile. And my "time" came sooner than I had expected. It would take my husband a good quarter of an hour to reach the telephone. It would take the doctor better than two hours to reach me. So I made my plans. I sterilized sheets and beds and old clothes. I had scissors and silk thread for the cord. I had the disinfectant my first doctor had used. I had a stout hand brush. And I had the calmness that came

from knowing that, in an emergency I could get along without help, or with only such help as my husband could give. I wrote out instructions for him to follow. After the arrival of my first-born I had asked the doctor questions and learned the why and wherefore of every step taken. I had tried to be very much among those present. I felt I was ready. . . .

The emergency didn't occur. In fact, the affair was quite an anticlimax. It all came off smoothly. But what I remember most gratefully is that I was in control of the situation, and not a helpless clod. I shall not go into a detailed recital of my two following births. One of them was in a village where the only doctor available was a gone-to-seed old fellow with alcohol thick on his breath. Save for the fact that he tied the cord, I may say that I had the baby unassisted.

Pain in childbirth? Of course there is pain. There's pain in an aching tooth, in an earache, in a real headachy headache. But childbirth is a pain that goes places and does things. There is even (and I am prepared for sneers) a certain ecstasy in it. And it leaves no aching memory.

Is it the woman or the doctor who is responsible for the fact that so many mothers are "not present"

when their children are born? I was discussing confinements recently with a young doctor. "I absolutely refuse to take a home confinement," he said. "It's too hard on me, bed isn't the right height; only one nurse to assist — perhaps not any." I asked him about births without "putting the mother to sleep." "No," he said, frankly, "I always insist on something at the last. Much easier; mother always keeps quiet. We're there to do what's necessary."

Through my mind flashed the recollection of friends who had come from the hospitals without their babies, shaking their heads, wondering: "I just can't understand. He seemed so full of life, kicking; then they put me to sleep; and when I asked for my baby, they told me it had been born dead. I just can't understand."

Perhaps, if they had been among those present, they would have understood. Perhaps they wouldn't have needed to try to understand. Perhaps they and nature could have lent doctor and child more effective aid than instruments did. I don't mean that all or most or many doctors are bunglers. I don't mean that they want the veil to be drawn just so that the mothers *can't* see. But nurses have been known to talk. "A beautiful child, but those cruel bruises!"

Normal birth can be a relatively easy process — if you can learn how to take it. I am convinced that the "painless" methods are often dangerous and cowardly. Women can enjoy the birth of their children to the full, physically, mentally, and emotionally. It is their right to participate in the greatest thing that happens in their lives.

II. *A Doctor Comments*

BY JOSEPH T. BOLOTIN, M.D.

MOTHERS are inclined to set themselves up as experts on the subject of childbirth. Their claim to expertness, in the final analysis, is little more valid than that of a chronic sufferer from toothache who would set up as authority on dentistry. They fall

into two groups, these maternal experts. The first, mostly young women, insists that the entire course of pregnancy, from conception through childbirth, should be emptied of all difficulties. Its obstetrical program calls for labor as a pleasant, medicated dream.

The second consists chiefly of older women, mothers of two or more children, who subscribe to the belief that childbirth is a grim, spartan affair, which it should be in order to promote a closer connection between mother and offspring. Each of these theses harbors a half-truth, with the seed of potential damage to mother and child.

It is true that the newlywed sophisticate, having become pregnant, may turn to hearsay about sedatives and analgesics. Fortified by amateur information supplied by some novice mother, she often approaches her obstetrician with the question, "How much pain will I have during delivery? My friend had no pain at all. She had a wonderful doctor." That's putting the physician on the spot. The problem of normal pregnancy and normal labor has hardly entered the mental ken of this mother-to-be. She judges the skill of her obstetrician only by his willingness to dispense sedatives and analgesics.

To that extent the anonymous mother who wrote the preceding article, though her approach is intuitive rather than scientific, has a measure of justice in her claims. While drugs occupy a definite place in obstetrics, there are, nevertheless, several associated complications which cannot be ignored.

Drugs frequently transfer patients into a wild, maniacal state that make normal co-operation impossible and a clean delivery more difficult. Drugs can be used, and are used, at proper stages of labor. But the doctor should not yield to a frantic petition by patient or relatives to use them indiscriminately. Although inhaling anesthesia may be a boon to many mothers, its promiscuous usage has produced cases of inhalation pneumonia and shock. Sedatives sometimes depress the respiratory movements of the foetus, and since the desire for creating artificial comfort for the mother has been foremost, a "blue baby" — a cyanotic infant who may die — is the result.

Older obstetricians, as a rule assured of the continuation of their practice and prestige, can and do restrain insistent mothers. The young obstetrician, unduly eager to render additional "service," is sometimes persuaded to conduct a so-called painless labor regardless of the propriety of such a course. Because of the exhortation by patient or family, many obstetrical cases are converted into pathological ones. In these circumstances, the attending doctor may resort to a type of interference which is injurious to both mother and child.

The arrival of each new drug is hailed in some quarters as a panacea for the alleviation of pain. Mothers-in-labor occasionally serve as mother guinea-pigs. Although the therapeutic value of a drug can be readily estimated by means of animal experimentation, some of the less reliable pharmaceutical houses release their products without sufficient experimental evidence to support enthusiastic claims. I do not wish to imply that drugs have no place in obstetrics. But I do maintain that drugs should be administered only after proper deliberation by the doctor.

At the same time, however, I do not believe that pain *must* be associated with childbirth. Where the obstetrician is able to lighten the pangs without risk to mother or child, it is his duty in common sense and common humanity to do so. If a few hours of painful contractions can be safely obviated, it is all to the good. The glorification of pain for its own sake seems to me a piece of superstition.

Nor is it advisable to teach the conduct of labor to the ordinary patient. We do live in a world where doctors and nurses and other outside help is always on tap. Half-knowledge on the mother's part may cause a feeling of false security. It may seem to some that

the activities of the obstetrician in preparation for the childbirth are slight. But it is a wise doctor who knows enough not to interfere with the course of normal labor. What looks to the lay observer (including, on occasion, the mother) like lack of interest, usually amounts to an accurate estimation of an obstetrical situation.

The desire to be awake and alert at the birth of the child — so eloquently expressed by the anonymous mother — is purely an individual reaction. It belongs in the domain of psychology rather than medicine. Some of my own patients, "absent" at the childbirth, have become splendid mothers. Others, though they participated actively in the process, turned out lamentably less than splendid. The observations made by a woman during her own period of labor certainly are insufficient as a basis for judgment and advice. They do not prepare her for the endless complications and *sequelae* that may attend allegedly simple, normal obstetrical delivery. Proper respect for every obstetrical procedure is attained by obstetricians only after many years of clinical experience. No individual mother can hope to attain similar experience by virtue of having given birth to her own family.

AMERICANA

CALIFORNIA

MANKIND's long quest for complete happiness is ended, according to the Golden Gate International Exposition, which reports in its publicity clip-sheet:

A "non-allergic" bedroom, designed to protect humans from everything to which they may react unfavorably, is part of the University of California's scientific exhibit.

FLORIDA

ANOTHER triumph for American industry is reported out of Key West in the *Miami Daily News*:

Not one audible curse was uttered during construction of the 125-ton schooner, G. R. Steadman, which will be launched from the foot of Simonton St. within the next 10 days.

GEORGIA

A GRATIFYING spiritual revival in Atlanta is recorded in the sports pages of the local *Journal*:

More Baptists witnessed the opening game in Atlanta than ever before in the history of baseball here.

ANOTHER state is moved by its Great Humanitarian Heart, now aching for unwedded womanhood, as chronicled by the *Atlanta Georgian*:

Groundwork was being laid Wednesday for an "old maids' assistance program," to be financed by — guess what — a tax on bachelorhood.

A bill to tax bachelors at the rate of \$100 a year and \$5 additional for each year they remain unmarried, was being prepared for introduction in the House by a group of leading representatives.

The proposed measure defines a bachelor or spinster as one over the age of 30 and still unmarried. It calls on the State Board of Public Welfare to compile a list of needy spinsters and to set up a program whereby the tax funds could be distributed pro rata.

ILLINOIS

A TRIUMPH of candor in the *Plumas Independent* of Quincy:

The Ellidges, Mister and Missus, Bonnie and Iris were dinner pests at Portola on Sunday.

MASSACHUSETTS

A READER of the Boston *Herald* reminds that cultured community of a neglected national resource:

When one comes to think about it, I wager that America is a country of poets. I could name 100 poets, yes 200 poets, just as fast as I could say their names in a minute, perhaps less.

FURTHER evidence that the American people are turning to religion is provided by a Boston *Globe* dispatch from Lynn:

Inaugurating an idea that made such a hit with his parish in Missouri, Rev. J. Sterling Ward, pastor of the Lakeside Methodist Episcopal Church, held a beauty contest for men at the church tonight.

Fifteen men, prominent in the Lakeside section, dressed as women, paraded back and forth across the stage using all the wiles of womankind on the judges to win the coveted prize.

NEW YORK

THE ever-accurate *American Swedish Monthly* tells on an eminent lady tourist:

Among recent visitors to New York was Mrs. Ellen Rydelius, celebrated Swedish author of a long and popular series of travel books. She spent six busy weeks in Manhattan, gathering material for a book to be entitled *New York in Eight Days*.

A MISOGYNIST among copy writers takes it out in an advertisement in the New York *Daily News*:

LOVELY LADIES OF THE
WORLD SOUGHT FOR N.T.G.'S
MONSTER CONCESSION AT
WORLD'S FAIR

THE much-publicized Escort Service for lonely ladies in New York City instructs its employees in the art of conversation, perhaps in the interests of a certain gin; the quotes are from a mimeographed instruction sheet:

When liquors are discussed say:—
"Talking about liquors, have you ever had Seagram's Ancient Bottle Gin?"

I've really never tasted any gin — domestic or imported — that can touch it for smooth, mellow flavor."

When girl orders a Martini say:—
"That suits me, too. (*Turning to waiter*) But make mine Seagram's Ancient Bottle Gin . . . and (*to girl*) won't you try one? They're much better and I'm sure you'll like it. (*To waiter*) Yes, make them both with Ancient Bottle Gin."

THE communist *New Masses* devotes its valuable space to still another economic discovery, conveyed in a letter from one of its readers:

I have stopped paying premiums for life insurance. What is the use of life insurance with fascism hanging over us?

OREGON

AT LEAST one community in our nation accepts punishment in a spirit of patriotic joy, according to the *Oswego Review*:

Friends and old-timers around Oswego and Oswego Lake are happy to have Leonard Hallinan assessing taxes again.

PENNSYLVANIA

THE Philadelphia *Record* newshawks throw some light on the progress of higher education in the USA:

In Corvallis, Ore., yesterday, Marion Salisbury, State College sophomore, swallowed 139 angle worms.

At Stanford University, Tom Killefer, 22, bit off the head of a 12-inch water snake.

In Easton, Pa., Joseph Stokitsky, Lafayette College junior, picked up a magazine and, in 25 minutes flat, had eaten both the covers.

THE Colonial Theatre, in Lancaster, defends the honor of a well-known Irish dramatist, in this sign:

This Picture
Is Not
Highbrow
Don't Be Misled
PYGMALION
Bernard Shaw

TENNESSEE

A READER of the distinguished Johnson* City *Press* defends the humbler ladies of the community against charges of snuff addiction:

I think a man is very narrow-minded to say that farm women and poor men's wives dip the snuff. The workingman's wife and the farmer's wife should not have to take the blame alone. I happen to know quite a few ladies in higher standing that dip it in their own homes and some of them in their own rooms. Their own families don't know they dip. I have been selling snuff for years and feel that am in position to know just who buys and dips snuff. Am saying this in defense of the poor man's wife and the workingman's wife, and would deeply appreciate if you would give it publication.

(THE MERCURY will pay \$1 for items accepted for Americana. Those found unsuitable cannot be returned.)

IN OTHER UTOPIAS ENGLAND

STURDY English womanhood takes a hand in foreign affairs, the London *Daily Express* indicates:

Naming a cocktail after Mr. Chamberlain's umbrella caused a protest yesterday at the British Women's Temperance Association Conference at Ayr.

PANAMA

THE strange behavior of a clock is reported casually by the Panama *Star & Herald* in the course of an obituary:

On Saturday, when as the evening hours grew into night, and the clock struck 10:20, her life's task had ended.

RUSSIA

NOTE on the progress of Stalinism, as reported to the New York *Times*:

Moscow has become fish-minded . . . Not fish to eat, but to keep as pets and feed . . . It seems to be Moscow dogma that bread crumbs are harmful to fish . . . So now they have a "worm queue" in Moscow in addition to other queues for food and shirts and galoshes . . .

THE STATE OF THE UNION

BY ALBERT JAY NOCK

College Men and the State

IN A recent issue of *Harper's*, John Chamberlain wrote, "An academic scout tells me that the youngest generation of college radicals is anarchistic and anti-State in its general outlook. Joe Stalin and Leon Trotsky are ceasing to exercise their old lure." This strikes me as the most important piece of political news that I have read in many years. If the scout is right, it is a sure sign that spring has come. Even if he is not exactly right, he has evidently seen something which shows that spring is on its way. In the last twenty-five years of steady winter weather it has often been hard to remember that spring always has come, and therefore is likely to come again. If this scout has actually seen a crocus or two pushing up, it is no more than you might expect.

The anti-State reaction would be perfectly natural to fresh minds which have not as yet been over-stuffed with nonsense and addled by false hopes. Looking at the performance government has been putting on the world's stage for

twenty-five years, they would naturally call it a middling rotten show. Nowhere is there any choice of acts or actors; the whole thing is an all-round flop. Acts and actors all look alike — all bad. The French and German shows are as smelly as the American, English, Russian, Italian, or any other show now before the public, no matter what the press-agents say. The handbills and posters are got up in flaming style, but the show is the same old kind of hokum done by the same old hams and barnstormers. This being so, the natural reaction is to tell the stage-manager to get the hook.

Unless I am much mistaken, also, the "youngest generation" is not looking at all this from the standpoint of "ideology" or of morals, but from the standpoint of results. Ideologies and morals are all right on the posters, but the show is what interests them, and the show just isn't there. Posters don't get results, and results are what count. In other words, I should not be surprised if the youngest generation were taking a realistic view

of politics. They are probably looking at government simply as a gadget, and deciding that the trouble with it is nothing but the old notorious trouble with gadgets — which is that they mostly don't work. The scout's young men may be taking the practical, hard-boiled view that government is a gadget which is meant to work for the good of society while you sleep, and is not doing it. This is a good sound view.

Looking at government as a gadget, here are a few questions which come up. I recommend them to Mr. Chamberlain's youngest generation of college radicals, hoping they will thresh them out as thoroughly as they can. First, then, since the governmental gadget is supposed to work for the good of society, how can it best do that?

Some say by protecting the country from invasion, and by protecting the individual and his property against assault and molestation. Nothing but that. After that, government should let society strictly alone to settle its messes as best it can, by its own co-operative efforts in accordance with the operation of natural law. It should also let the individual citizen strictly alone to deal with his own private messes in like fashion. It should interfere with the individ-

ual only for acts which lawyers call *malum in se* — acts which are branded as criminal by what the Scotch philosophers called "the common sense of mankind," such as murder, assault, fraud, theft, arson. It should do nothing about the *malum prohibitum*, nothing about acts concerning which the common sense of mankind is divided, such as selling whiskey, possessing gold, or growing potatoes in one's garden. Under this theory of social good, in fact, the *malum prohibitum* would not exist; there would be no such thing as a *malum prohibitum*.

Another school of thought holds that government should do everything for society which it can do easier and quicker than society can do for itself. Natural law is too slow. Evolutionary processes take too long and involve too much inconvenience and suffering. If society gets in a mess, government can pull it out easier and quicker than society can work itself out. Hence it should. Again, government can make easy short-cuts to many good things which otherwise society could get only by long and painful effort. Hence it should. Government, with its privileged position, immense resources, and close organization, can do almost everything for society — some say

everything — easier and quicker than society itself can do. Hence it should.

The question, then, is whether it is better to have as little government as possible, or as much. What are the pros and cons of this? Natural law works slowly, no doubt, but on the other hand, when it settles a mess, that mess is settled right, and settled forever, which the quick and easy method of governmental interference seldom does. While natural law is settling a mess, it does not breed more and worse messes — all kinds of unsuspected messes — which the quick and easy method usually does. Trusting to natural law means facing a great deal of trouble and suffering which seems unnecessary, but on the other hand, trusting to governmental interference to escape these evils usually means laying up much more pain and trouble for the future. There is plenty of experience to show that government's quick and easy interferences for the present well-being of society are practically certain to insure its future ill-being.

Between these two theories of what government can best do for society's good, which is the one to choose? A third school of thought says to choose neither, but compromise between the two; and

since this school includes pretty nearly everybody, it has always carried the day.

So let us examine the position of this third school and ask a few more exploratory questions. Should government run the post office or leave it to private enterprise? Should it issue currency, standardize weights and measures, fix tariffs, give franchises, land-grants, subsidies? If we can say "Yes," then should government control the practice of banking, medicine, surgery, dentistry, agriculture? If we say "Yes," then should it administer charity, provide education, maintain schools and colleges? Should it concede that the State owes everybody a living, and proceed accordingly? Should it take on a full program of "social legislation," with housing, pensions, doles, and all other measures of "social security?" Finally, should it take complete control and direction of all social and individual activities?

The question is obviously where your compromise is going to stop, and why it should stop at one point in this progression rather than at some other point. The answer must obviously be made from the long-time point of view. Will society be better served *in the long run* if you stop at this point rather than at

that point? If you stop here rather than there, are you taking care of society's proximately-good at the expense of its ultimately-good? Admitting, for example, that if you let government "help business" you do something for society's present well-being, yet you at once put it in the position of an auctioneer, throw open the way for pressure-groups, and thus directly bring about a monstrously disproportionate state of permanent ill-being. If you let government administer charity, you may keep society out of a painful temporary mess, but as we are now seeing, the permanent political and social consequences make up an extortionately high price to pay for the good you do.

Again, can you be sure that you could make any compromise stop where you want it to stop? This question will bear a great deal of probing. Why should conceding a new function to government always be like starting a snowball down hill? Why should government always be reaching out for new powers and functions, always consolidating what it gets, never giving up any except under life-and-death pressure? Why should it seek always to aggrandize itself, never be content with the importance assigned it? If its function is

to serve society, why does it always seek to graduate out of the status of a servant and become society's master? Is it in the nature of any compromise you could possibly make, that this should be so — that if you give government an inch it will take an ell?

II

I suggest that Mr. Chamberlain's young men go through these questions with a fine-tooth comb and mull them over thoroughly, and then decide whether any compromise between the two schools of thought is practicable. If they do this, I think it may help them to clarify their anti-State outlook. They should be able to turn up all the books they need out of their college libraries. Statist literature of all kinds — communist, fascist, totalitarian, or what-not — is lying about so thick everywhere that there is no need to recommend any of it by name — one can't miss it, and can't very well go wrong. Literature of the opposing school is scarce and harder to find. It is headed by Herbert Spencer's *Social Statics* and his essays called *The Man Versus the State*. Compromise-literature is plentiful; probably Professor Laski's *The State in Theory and Practice* would do well to start.

I take it that these young men are open to suggestions which may help them to interpret their own experience and observations. Everywhere they are seeing society go down hill pretty fast. In their own country they see that decent Americans are all poorer, more discouraged, harassed, and unhappy than they were ten years ago. They see the way of life made unnecessarily hard by the very agency which is supposed to make it easier, and by that agency alone. Hence most naturally they are feeling, as the Declaration puts it, that when government makes such a dreadful botch of its business, "it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

Precisely so — and these young men are those who will have a hand in the forthcoming business of altering or abolishing, of making a new start. Therefore it is important that they should make up their minds on what "such principles" are. They see that totalitarian principles are not the thing; they

see that compromise principles are not the thing either — they are distinctly not delivering the goods. They see that in the countries where compromise principles have been longest in force and most thoroughly worked out, they seem to deliver less goods than in countries where they are relatively new. The third set of principles has not yet been tried, so experience can say nothing about it.

In their present frame of mind, it seems that the thing for these young men to do is to look into the three sets of principles which I have mentioned — the individualist set, the Statist set, and the compromise set. My questions may be of some help to them in this; they were meant to be, and I hope will be.

I suggest that the young men read up carefully on all three sets of principles, talk them over thoroughly among themselves, and thus get a provisional idea of the scheme of governmental organization which "to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness." If their idea is sound and workable, it will come in uncommonly handy someday, and the sooner they get it put together, the better.

POETRY

DECORATION DAY

BY LOUIS STODDARD

IF we could speak today to all our dead
these are the bitter words we must have said:

Here, soldier, lilacs to recall the beauty
of lanes you left behind in name of duty,
and slender tulips from a sunlit bed,
warmer than the one that rests your head;
they are yours, sailor, for your memory,
to help you to recall the sparkling sea,
the funnels swinging and the evening star;
these things were yours but they no longer are.
How well the hills have kept their old contours,
the softly-lighted slopes where evening pours
night from a generous cup of days and nights
and the untroubled stars put forth their lights.

Remember the world? How bright it was with color?
Flowers roof your dark and narrow cellar.

THESE DARK HILLS

BY JESSE STUART

As oaks that root deep in Kentucky earth
And these eternal juts of rock that stand,
I stand with these dark hills that gave me birth
With plow and hoe and slopes of sedge-grass land.
Flesh in my body and blood in my veins

Are of the substance that has made the oaks;
This earth my living flesh, and it remains
Strong to endure more than the blackjack strokes.
This is the land where I can live and sing,
Where I can drink the rain and taste the sun;
Where I can work or not do anything
But listen to winds blow and waters run.
These hills are closer to me than my skin,
My roof could be the sky, my bed the rocks;
My only music the night blowing wind,
The pouring rivers and the barking fox.

SURF-BOARD RIDER

BY EDITH CHERRINGTON

DARK against the drapery of blue,
Cresting the darker waters of the sea,
Straight as a mast that leans against the wind
He comes, a god incarnate riding free!

The curving smoothness of the sloping sand
Is in his graceful outstretched arms which reach
In arching symmetries to north and south.
His shoulder line, as firm as any beach,

Defies the foaming crescent of a wave.
Strength is molded in his breast and thigh,
Brown as the hills that supplement the shore
And build the dark horizon for the sky.

His is the exultation of the flesh,
The bold transfiguration of the dust;
A carnal stronghold for the joy of life
Which crests adventure and at last is thrust

Against a climax when the waters pour
His gay assurance out upon the shore.

SPRING SONG

BY CATHARINE CONNELL

NO name on wintry stone for me
But, oh, I wish that I might be
Remembered in May's memory;

That May, each year, might briefly think
Of me and write with fragrant ink
In blue or starry white or pink

Some bell-like bud, some airy spray —
Me, proudly hailing sky and day,
Me, home at last though not to stay.

No epitaph carved stern and plain
When lovers strolling in some lane
Might kiss to see me back again.

PLANTATION GIRL

BY LUELLA STONE

SHE carries clothes with all the savage grace
And savage charm of Africa. Her face
Is warm and cold, enigmatic, like a storm
That's warm and cold, approaching. Her bold form
Is carved like dark mahogany with strong,
Bold strokes of some old carving. In her song
She holds the beat of jungle drums; her slow,
Low tone the beat of tom-toms. With her low,
Slow tone she barter cotton for a sack
Of corn for pone or cornbread. On her back
She carries clothes or cotton but, apart,
She holds the beat of jungles in her heart!

DOWN TO EARTH

BY ALAN DEVOE

How Domesticated Are We?

AS WE modern human beings sit in our insulated houses or apartments and look forth on our treeless, neon-lighted cities of steel and concrete and macadam, the dawn-days of our race seem very long ago. It seems to us, in our complacency, that an almost immeasurable immensity of time must have passed since our horny-knuckled ancestors chipped crude stone tools and lived naked in the forest. But the scientists tell us that these things were happening only yesterday. They tell us that we are a species which only yesterday was roaming the primeval woods, and they remind us that, for all our clever, new-built civilization, we are still today separated from our Mother Earth only by the thickness of our shoe-soles. The signs and evidences of the recency of our divorce from the wild, say the scientists, are all around us.

Perhaps you are sitting at this moment in a comfortable cushioned rocking-chair, your pet terrier or spaniel at your feet. To the casual eye, you and your pet present a

completely "civilized" picture, but the eye of science looks at you more searchingly. Science notes with interest, for instance, the way your dog turns around and around before he lies down on the rug, and science finds this senseless behavior pregnant with significance. Not very long ago, you see, your little terrier or spaniel was a wolf. He hunted his prey on the wild, wind-swept plains, and he took his rest in a bed or "form" in the tall grass.

Science looks at him now, turning foolishly around and around on the hearthrug, and science perceives a wolf busy at bed-making. It is the same wolf-character that your dog displays when, on some moonlit night, he stops his usual cheery barking and emits instead a long-drawn howl. That howl is the cry that the wolves used to utter, when they called one another from the hilltops in the morning of the world.

The eye of science studies the cushioned rocking-chair in which — we fancied — you are sitting, and finds that even this piece of

furniture is eloquent of your not-very-distant primitive past. Why the cushion in the chair? Because you are an anthropoid not really fully adapted to the unnatural sitting position, and because the vertebrae at the root of your spine were never designed to bear your body's weight. And why a *rocking-chair* at all? Professor J. Norman Moore speaks one scientist's answer when he says:

The rocking-chair is an artificial tree-top; human beings would never have invented these things, because they would never have had parts in their nature calling for their invention, if our far ancestors had not been tree-dwellers.

Every aspect of our modern world reveals to science some evidence of what may be called the Living Past — some hint that the dawn-days of earth were really only yesterday. Our little house-cats, petted and be-ribboned, still go through the pantomime of the wildcat's stalking and pouncing, still scratch at our upholstered furniture to exercise the muscles which their ancestors used daily in hunting their arboreal prey. High above the canyons of our city streets, in the crannies of great office-buildings, the pigeons still precariously lay their eggs; for they are still close to their ancestors, the wild rock-doves that lived on the

primeval sea-cliffs of what was to become Europe.

On our farms, the little pigs drop flat on their bellies when something frightens them, and science deduces that this now-useless maneuver is a heritage from the forest-boars which thus hid from an enemy . . . the same shaggy boars whose habit of rooting in the earth for bulbs still survives now in the trough-fed pigs. And thus it happens, too, that when the warm April sun touches our barnyards, the farmer's penned-up flightless geese grow strangely restless, and sometimes utter a curious honking cry. The passage of generations has not obliterated their response to the old call of the wild, the ancient summons to be off again toward the Pole.

II

Because most of us talk so glibly of our "civilization," and assume so blithely that we are far removed from those rude woods-wandering forbears who plucked wild berries and snared their meat beside a water-hole, it comes as something of a shock to learn that at least one eminent anthropologist labels homo sapiens as a creature only "partially domesticated." And yet, if we look at the evidence, the rea-

sons for such labeling are plain enough. Our veneer of domesticity is thin and recent, and the vestiges of our old way of life are constantly showing through.

There are our fears, for instance — fears which in the modern world are wholly groundless, but which persist and color all our days. There is our fear of black things, and of caves and darkness, an aversion so intense, and nowadays so unreasonable, that it can be explained only as a survival from the time when the night teemed with our enemies and when every cave was a lair. There is our fear of loud noises (preposterous in an industrial age), and of sudden movements — two fears ascribable respectively to our memory of the great roaring carnivores and our memory of our erstwhile practice of ambush. There is our uneasiness with strangers, a subconscious relic of the tribal days when a stranger was presumably our enemy. Most curious and significant of all, there is our terror of the snake. It is a deep-grained terror and it will not down, even in those regions where now the snakes are as harmless as butterflies. When we prowled shoeless among the giant ferns and creepers, the snake was the subtlest and deadliest enemy we had, and the great tree-snakes of the primor-

dial jungle have left a long, long memory.

It is not alone by our fears that we show how close beneath our “civilized” exteriors lurks the primitive man-of-the-past. The sleek-styled business suits we don, as we set off for office or factory, conceal growths of protective body-hair which tell how recently we wore no clothes at all; the pinching shoes which we affect have not altered that structure of our toes and arches which marks us as a species designed for running and leaping and climbing trees.

Beyond the myriad merely biological evidences, there are others even more significant. There are our insuppressible hankerings, our queer nostalgias. One longing, especially, still lies half-sleeping in every modern man — the longing to build a fire on a hearth. There is no urbanite so citified that the tending of a crackling fire does not stir old, old memories in his tuft-eared skull, the smell of burning pine-wood evoke an emotion as ancient as the race itself. We get our heat now, most of us, by adjusting a thermostat or turning a radiator-valve. But once upon a time, not very long ago, we conjured fire with our own hands, and the cave or forest clearing where the fire-light flickered was our home.

Every hour of his day, the most "civilized" of modern men performs rites which proclaim how recently he has left the forest and prairie, how newly-separated he is from the companionship of birds and beasts. We never even write a letter or sign our names without giving evidence of these things. Our letter *A*, anthropologists have found, is only a modification of a picture of an eagle; the letter *C* derives from our drawing of a crane; the letter *N* was our aboriginal symbol for the water-line.

There is not a facet of our modern lives which does not show, sometimes in thin disguise, what

Adam Whyte has called "the surge of ancient forces through the crust."

And thus, say some psychologists, it is not surprising that we suffer nowadays from so many maladjustments and neuroses. For we modern human beings are really still a tribe of lusty-bodied, sun-loving, sky-loving earth-dwellers, now wilfully seeking to accommodate ourselves to rhythms that are not the rhythms of our earth at all, and to life-patterns that have no counterpart in nature. We are still, in our hearts, creatures of the wild. Our spiritual kinship with the earth sleeps still within us.



THE FREEDOM OF DISCUSSION

BY LESLIE STEPHEN

I, for one, am fully prepared to listen to any argument for the propriety of theft or murder, or, if it be possible, of immorality in the abstract. No doctrine, however well established, should be protected from discussion. If any appreciable number of persons are inclined to advocate murder, I should wish them to state their opinions openly, because I should think that the shortest way of exploding the principle.

THE LIBRARY

America at High Noon

BY ALFRED KAZIN

THE good do not always die young in America. As they approach the last years of their middle age, Charles Austin Beard and Oswald Garrison Villard can rejoice in the knowledge that they have become Elder Statesmen. They have achieved the respectability that they once derided. Where now are the old women who cackled at Dr. Beard's *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution*, stoned Mr. Villard when he pointed to the debris of Wilsonian promise at Versailles, filled their histories with silly little myths, egged Beard out of the universities? Our memorials today are for Altgeld and Wendell Phillips, for Veblen and LaFollette. And Theodore Roosevelt gets smaller every year.

In 1904, as Villard tells the story in his *Fighting Years*,¹ Roosevelt became afraid early in the campaign that Judge Parker would get the

big money and win. He had Frick and Harriman steal their way to the White House unobserved, and promised them everything in sight to get their support. No more Roosevelt scowl, no more mock alarums of trust-busting, no more socialistic nonsense. The rest is history. "He got down on his knees to us," Frick told Villard. "We bought the son of a bitch and he did not stay bought."

To tell that story today is the Villard victory. It is a sweet victory, if such a little one. The Great Meddler to the fat boys, the Anxious Liberal to the left, he has had a good and significant life, if not an overly distinguished one. Morally his generation offered few better. Yet it is curiously not the story of an education. The grandson of the Liberator, William Lloyd Garrison, and the son of the wealthy, liberal, and cultivated German-born railroad magnate, Henry Villard, he was given a legacy compounded of New England abolitionism, the

¹ *Fighting Years*, by Oswald Garrison Villard. \$3.75. Harcourt, Brace.

German revolution of '48, and Northern Pacific Railroad shares. It was a noble legacy, and an unusual one; for if he was given wealth, he was taught to look beyond it. It enabled him to sit with the titans of the day and to despise them; it gave him what the self-made, the greedy, the hangers-on never possessed and could never afford to possess — the sense of their own futility.

If that heritage launched him, it also muffled him. Perhaps he did not rise from it because there was so little to rise to; he was born to an extraordinarily virtuous culture, and he had only to respect it. Yet as one thinks back over his career, with its courage and its anguish, he remains an exception not among Americans, but among publishers. It was his position that gave him his chance, and what he lent to that position that gave him his dignity. He flogged at the coat tails of the Munseys and the Hearsts; he was honorable where they were venal, curious where they were blind, sympathetic where they were cold. It has been his sympathy — in truth, his capacity to share the sufferings of others — that has always identified him and endeared him to others.

But for the rest? The story of Oswald Garrison Villard is the rec-

ord of successive disillusionments. The greatest of them was Woodrow Wilson, that scholar in politics in whose rigid and awkward mind, grooved upon the aspirations of his generation, Villard saw the best promise of the liberal spirit. To have survived that disillusionment as Oswald Garrison Villard has survived it is an achievement; he was deeply scarred by the War. But the capacity to affirm is so rare in America that one looks back longingly to Villard's many opportunities. He has been so long in the anterooms of power, the gadfly of Presidents and the confessor of rebels, that one wonders why he never traced power to its source. Oswald Garrison Villard has always judged men by their goodness; he has believed firmly that man can be good if he wills. But the trouble is not only that goodness is never enough, but that American life so rarely predisposes man to be good at all.

In any case, Mr. Villard has lived close to the major events and people of these last six decades. He writes of them intimately. His autobiography is history in personal terms, a sort of supplement and exemplification, for the period covered, to the Beards' story of our country's civilization and it makes absorbing reading.

II

As a record of one's immediate time, *America in Midpassage*¹ probably has no parallel in historical literature. Here is the Heartbreak House of 1928-1938, the Golden Glow and the Great Smash, the decade of the many earnest hopes and their mangling, the era of the Great Tinkering. The Beards have not only rounded out the rich achievement of *The Rise of American Civilization*, but fulfilled the promise of a new history.

Beginning with the last shrill clutch of Hoover optimism, it follows the declining cycle down, down, down. Black Friday and the German Moratorium, apple-venders and the RFC, the great lockout of credit, falling banks and financiers falling out of banks. Then the shadow on the face of history, 1932. The Roosevelt stampede; the only thing to fear is fear itself; the Brain Trust juggling into Washington; the NRA. We all support recovery. The first foray of the Supreme Court and the whirlwind finish of 1936. CWA into PWA into WPA. And what have we got? We have a Recession! The great whirl of the American present: Federal Arts Projects, political cannibalism

in Washington, naturalism in literature, folksiness in literature, murals on the walls, and the menace of war. Collective security rears its pristine head. The Beards have made this amazing epoch in America's maturing coherent for us who have lived through it.

Yet the book has its omissions and its gaucheries. The long chapter on literature, with its tireless enumeration of authors and titles, is a catalogue of doubtful value; the grouping of Honoré Morrow and William Faulkner as "historical novelists," and of Hyman Kaplan and Studs Lonigan as fictional symbols of equal value, seems to me ridiculous.

More serious is the absence of any careful study of Franklin Roosevelt. The transformation of the weak and amiable Governor of New York into the New Dealer is a political event of far greater magnitude than the destruction of the World Economic Conference, and as significant as the slow attrition of the Democratic Party. Where Villard under-estimates Roosevelt, the Beards tend to ignore him. The cascade of events flows over him; one misses not only his responsibility, but his mind. Yet it is precisely of the Roosevelt mind as reflected in the pace and range of his Administrations that the Beards have

¹ *America in Midpassage*, by Charles A. and Mary R. Beard. \$5.00. Macmillan.

written, of his improvisations and his ambition, and essentially of his rhetoric.

What is most remarkable in the Beards' work is not its astonishing organization of material, but its elusiveness. They have withdrawn so compactly from the slogans and favors of the present that they seem almost scornful of it. But that is the mark of the Beard mind, a way of writing history with one ear on the laughter of eternity. They have caught what no other student of our recent history has fully understood — the common dismay that underlies the gangling procession out of the promised land, 1928–1938. It is not a tragic temper. Placed in the world scene, the story of America's last ten years is as disordered, if not as desperate, as the *Realpolitik* of the tired old men now holding on to power in Europe. But our very attempt to slough off old illusions, to attempt a renaissance of national energy, has made our failure all the more poignant.

It is not that we have had a gap between our resolution and our achievement; it is rather that we have never known what we wanted. The astonishing thing about the Roosevelt wave of reform is that it has never been an educational movement; it has not, like the Wil-

son who stormed into the White House on the peak of the progressive movement in 1913, re-invigorated a whole generation. We have had a slow and grudging acceptance of reality; but the motto of our day has been improvisation: try anything once, hold on for dear life, anything may happen.

The truth is that there is no force in America today that is organized to engineer its future. Jackson had a rousing frontier democracy, Lincoln an ambitious middle-class, Bryan half a continent of embattled farmers, Wilson a progressive movement. The profound dislocation of party forces today has not welded people of similar belief; it has weakened them. What we do possess, for want of anything else, is a chastened public opinion. Americans scare easily; but the years spent licking the wounds of economic disaster have not been in vain. If they have not given us a sense of our destiny, they have enforced the meaning of survival.

It is of this that the Beards speak when they point to "a generation disillusioned with respect to make-believe and yet sturdy in its faith in life." They have illustrated it excitingly in their sympathetic examination of the return to folklore and the cultural activities of the

Works Progress Administration. I am heretical enough to believe that our renewed interest in the American past has been one way of marking time. I like that interest; I prefer it to the America that once giggled over *Jurgen* and *Main Street*, to expatriate America, to the

America of the lost generation, to the Coolidge obscenities. But they had something to go by — money in the bank, stocks going up, power purring over the radio and out of the Golden Glow. But we? We stand at high noon in a drizzle; and all our prophets seem terribly tired.

THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from front advertising section)

FICTION

THE THIBAULTS, by Roger Martin Du Gard. \$3.00. *Viking*. A rich family chronicle by the winner of last year's Nobel Prize. Remarkable for its characterization, though hardly less outstanding for the vivid picture it gives of a slice of French bourgeois life. For those who like novels solid and satisfying.

DOCTOR ADDAMS, by Irving Fineman. \$2.50. *Random House*. An account, in fiction form, of medical split-personalities — the doctors who work for scientific research institutions, and at the same time try to live human lives of their own. Sex comes in for most of the discussion; it's frank but not objectionable. A really powerful work.

THE YOUNG COSIMA, by Henry Handel Richardson. \$2.50. *Norton*. Another proof that truth is stranger than fiction. If the author lacked historical justification for this story of Cosima Liszt-Wagner, she would be accused of concocting something hopelessly unreal. It's all true, though, and admirable foundation for a novel.

THE MIDDLE PASSAGE, by Roland Barker and William Doerflinger. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. A novel, based on fact, of the slave raids in Africa and the slave ships plying between the Guinea Coast and North America at the beginning of the past century. Extremely readable.

OVER THE MOUNTAIN, by Ruthven Todd. \$2.50. *Knopf*. A combination allegory-melodrama which will appeal to fanciers of curious books. The main character is enabled to see the world with new eyes, and his comments are beautifully caustic. At the same time he indulges in hair-raising heroics. An odd omelet.

SPRING JOURNEY, by Geneva Stephenson. \$2.20. *Macmillan*. Crowded narrative, bearing a strong resemblance to the classic *Broad Highway*, of eighteenth century England. Such immortals as Dr. Johnson and Fielding appear, besides fictional characters whose adventures enable the author to exhibit the life of the time.

HERE COMES A CANDLE, by Storm Jameson. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. A careful novel from a skilful hand, tying together the lives of the various inhabitants of a run-down London mansion-turned-lodging-house. The author restricts herself to the surface of her characters' lives, and you never feel that her heart is in this particular work. As always, though, her technique is excellent.

THE WILD PALMS, by William Faulkner. \$2.50. *Random House*. The story of a young doctor caught in a belated passion, and the story of a convict whom the floodwaters of the Mississippi confront with the unwelcome physical fact of woman, tormenting him to seek speedy return to the monastic security of prison. The two themes alternate in fugue pattern, resolving in the memory of experience for one, and the safety of the prison-cradle for the other. Here is no glib tale of an epoch, but the interplay of the irreducible antitheses of life, attraction and repulsion. A book far above the flood of fiction.

BIOGRAPHY

DIEGO RIVERA: His Life and Times, by Bertram D. Wolfe. \$6.00. *Knopf*. The third book of a trilogy on the life and work of Rivera. No book about the artist could be dull, he is himself so colorful and has led so rich a life. Mr. Wolfe, however, gives us more than a lively biography of the man; he supplies analyses of representative Rivera works, as well as some valuable material on the background and trends of modern painting. Beautifully bound and printed, the book contains effective reproductions of Rivera's oils, sketches, and murals, and a list of Rivera paintings on public view.

ALL IN THE DAY'S WORK, by Ida M. Tarbell. \$3.50. *Macmillan*. The most important memoir by one of the redoubtable muckrakers since Steffens' *Autobiography* — and Miss Tarbell's most important book since *The History of the Standard Oil Company* (1904). Miss Tarbell did not follow up her masterpiece and other writers carried on her

fight against boss and corporation rule, until their magazines were physically destroyed and they themselves dispersed. Miss Tarbell's mounting conservatism did not save her from equal loss of influence — just why, is clearly though unconsciously explained. Those who see a need for bridging the gap the World War created between the past and the present, will find this balanced, self-critical story helpful and challenging.

MISS BAX OF THE EMBASSY, by Emily Bax. \$3.00. *Houghton Mifflin*. Memoirs of an English girl who was stenographer at the American Embassy in London during the reigns there of Joseph H. Choate, Whitelaw Reid, and Walter H. Page. Filled with the kind of gossip one might expect, mainly about the social and personal side of embassy life and the troubles caused by socially ambitious women.

FREMONT, by Allan Nevins. \$5.00. *Appleton-Century*. "A career that was never quite tragic, never quite heroic, but always in limbo between the two — always in the classical sense tragicomic" — such is the story of Fremont, explorer, geographer, soldier, and first Republican standard-bearer. More important than the man himself was the period, as exciting a chapter as any in the history of America. Painstaking scholarship, plus an unerring sense for the dramatic, make this a brilliant piece of historical writing.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A GERMAN REBEL, by Toni Sender. \$3.00. *Vanguard*. An ambitious girl who became one of the leaders of the Social Democrats tells her story matter-of-factly, and gives some personal lights on well-known personalities of pre-Hitler Germany. While she provides no sensational new insight into the development of Germany, the book is worth reading as a human document.

I WANTED TO BE AN ACTRESS, by Katharine Cornell. As told to Ruth Woodbury Sedgwick. \$3.00. *Random House*. An account of Miss Cornell's career to date,

omitting most of the emotions but none of the dates. Altogether this volume gives the impression that the actress dwells in another world where the strife and difficulties of the theatre, and of the world in general, seldom penetrate. That impression is heightened by the peculiar, fulsome style with which her collaborator has chosen to write the book. The contemporary reviews of Cornell performances and the illustrations are good.

MISCELLANEOUS

WHICH WAY AMERICA?, by Lyman Bryson; LET ME THINK, by Harry A. Overstreet; HERE COMES LABOR, by Chester M. Wright; THEY WORKED FOR A BETTER WORLD, by Allan Seagar. 60¢. *Macmillan*. The first volumes of The People's Library, an enterprise of the American Association for Adult Education, undertaken that knowledge may be "humanized so that ordinary citizens, who are the people who need it most in our time, may find it understandable and useful." Specifically the Library books are attractive, stimulating treatments aimed at "the millions of people who read magazines but never books." Dr. Bryson leads off by considering the battle of propagandas which are striving to win over the American citizen, and discusses simply and clearly the bases of communist, fascist, and democratic governments. Dr. Overstreet offers practical and stimulating comment on such questions as unhappiness, wealth, idleness, and so on. Mr. Wright tells the story behind the labor news in the newspapers, and Mr. Seagar writes of Roger Williams, Thomas Paine, Emerson, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Edward Bellamy, idealists who worked for a better America.

MAN'S ESTATE. Adventures in Economic Discovery, by Alfred M. Bingham. \$3.00. *Norton*. Mr. Bingham's adventures in economic discovery have taken him around the radical-liberal circuit from Marx to Moses (Robert W., who is New York's enterprising Park Commissioner). It is an entertaining mélange of autobiography, economics, and

politics. Reflections on Coney Island are included along with an amazing interview with Mussolini in which Il Duce yells into Bingham's ear that "fascism is socialism. Fascism is communism." Mr. Bingham's argument is that "the difference between capitalism and socialism is in so many respects verbal and unreal, that the transition through which we are now passing may be of a far less drastic character than commonly supposed."

THE SUN AT NOON, by Kenneth B. Murdock. \$2.75. *Macmillan*. Scholarly, readable research into the lives of Elizabeth Carey, Viscountess Falkland; her son, Viscount Falkland; and John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, the brilliant and immoral friend of Charles II. These three were members of the same social class, and all spent their lives in a common quest — to see "the sun at noon" — the ultimate truth.

KNOWLEDGE FOR WHAT? The Place of Social Science in American Culture, by Robert S. Lynd. \$2.50. *Princeton University Press*. Mr. Lynd, co-author of *Middletown* and *Middletown in Transition*, advances a trenchant criticism of the present dilemma confronting the social sciences. The social scientist "hired by businessmen trustees" finds himself caught between the rival demands for straight, incisive and, if need be, radically divergent thinking, and the growingly insistent demand that his thinking shall not be subversive." The author lists twelve social problems which the social scientist must face, "or else —"

THE LAKE OF THE ROYAL CROCODILES, by Eileen Bigland. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. The lake is Shiwa Ngandu in the heart of the former Bemba kingdom in Northern Rhodesia where the author studied the Bembas, formerly one of the most virile tribes of East Africa, and the effect on them of British rule. She also traveled widely through Northern Rhodesia and Tanganyika; her impressions are full of excitement, humor, and keen observation.

THE LOGIC OF MODERN PSYCHOLOGY, by Carroll C. Pratt. \$2.00. *Macmillan*. If you believe that "all facts are a function of their method," this is the book for you. Among the points stressed are a sobering consideration of the extent of mankind's interest in truth, a very neat evaluation of Freud, and a shrewd estimate of Dale Carnegie's and others' attempts to influence people. Prof. Pratt's final word is to call the psychologists back to the cloisters. We'd have lost a good book if he had heeded that call.

THE ADVENTURES OF A HAPPY MAN, by Channing Pollock. \$1.50. *Crowell*. Mr. Pollock is never smug, and he keeps his sense of humor well to the fore, so his inspirational works are quite easy to take. Never in his life, he says, has he had an unhappy moment; but after perusing these pages one is tempted to suspect that boundless health and perfectly functioning glands, rather than superior philosophy or intelligence, are the reason. But Mr. Pollock doesn't think so, and he may be right.

UNSOLVED MYSTERIES OF THE ARCTIC, by Vilhjalmur Stefansson. \$3.50. *Macmillan*. A famous explorer turns detective, and, on the basis of the existent records and of his own highly specialized knowledge, seeks to explain the fate of the Franklin Expedition, Andr  e's death, etc. The resultant book makes fascinating reading for Arctic enthusiasts and armchair sleuths alike.

CURTAINS GOING UP, by Albert McCleery and Carl Glick. \$4.00. *Pitman*. An informative discussion of the contemporary American community theatre, which is considered by many authorities to be far more important and worthwhile than the professional Broadway stage. *Curtains Going Up* tends to bear out this belief, and altogether it indicates a promising future for the native drama. Illustrations and appendix material on plays, costs, contracts, etc., round out a highly valuable book.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MAKING LIFE INTERESTING, by Wendell White. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. First aid for the bored, stressing the need for variety in life and describing ways of keeping out of a rut. Chapters cover Expressing Varied Thoughts and Attitudes, Varying the Voice and Play of Features, etc.

YOUR CITY, by E. L. Thorndike. \$2.00. *Harcourt Brace*. Short, compact study, the result of three years' analysis of 310 American cities. Not as colorful as *Middletown*, but packed with facts and conclusions for serious students of American life.

THE WATCHER AND THE NEST, by Margaret Morse Nice. \$2.00. *Macmillan*. Observation of birds, simple and rather saccharine, but full of really good information on bird habits.

ESCAPE TO LIFE, by Erika and Klaus Mann. \$3.50. *Houghton Mifflin*. A gossipy scrambled dish prepared with too little attention to the ingredients. These children of Thomas Mann are so devoid of political sense that everything anti-Hitler becomes entirely too noble to conform with known facts. Charitable explanation may be found in their admission that prior to the advent of Hitler they were not interested in politics.

SCULPTURE INSIDE AND OUT, by Malvina Hoffman. \$3.75. *Norton*. A combination outline and philosophy of sculpture with helpful suggestions to would-be carvers of stone, intelligent in its practical suggestions. Illustrations of sculpture of all ages, and many pictures of processes, add considerably to its value.

LATIN AMERICA, by T. H. White. \$3.75. *Macmillan*. A readable history, concise yet full. Also one of the very few books on Latin America relating the many revolutions and pronunciamientos since the Wall Street crash in 1929 and the subsequent collapse of the many Latin-American dictators, when no more loans were forthcoming for the support of their armies.

THE OPEN FORUM

U.S.A. AND THE COMING WAR

SIR: This letter is to express my sincere appreciation for the excellent support which THE MERCURY is giving to the people who feel that our foreign policy should be strictly neutral. Month after month your magazine has given voice to the sentiments of a minority whose members believe it is not our right or duty to pick out the naughty nations in the feuds of the old worlds. "USA: The Aggressor Nation" in the December issue has not yet been equaled, even by "We're Blundering Into War" in April. As most of the press of all types has gone over to the collective-suicide bloc, the common sense policy of THE MERCURY is worth at least these thanks. I am not alone in this sentiment.

JACK SAMSON

*Portland,
Oregon.*

SIR: I am particularly pleased with your position on the war question. With the Communist Party gone chauvinist, and its fellow-traveling agencies turned into recruiting stations, it is a deep source of satisfaction to find some liberals remaining to whom democracy is an end, not a means, and who as men of principle know that only by democratic means can a democratic end be shaped.

FRANK D. SLOCUM

New York City.

SIR: If Professor Beard had written with anything like the fair and humane temper that used to characterize his work, I should have been able to read his article with understanding and respect, even though I might not altogether agree with his conclusions. As it is, the flood of wanton insult which he pours forth against nearly one-third of the American people, together with the tacit misrepresenta-

tion of the views of those who disagree with him and the cool assumption of some of his major data — all these so confuse his argument that I, for one, am not quite sure what he is really driving at.

Professor Beard assumes, for example, that "the possibility of peace and security in this hemisphere is clearly open to us." That would stand a little proving. In so far as it is questionable, it loses force. Further, he tacitly misrepresents the position of many, and probably most, of those who disagree with him, when he imputes to them either an ecstatic desire or a thoughtless willingness to plunge this country into war. Many of us think the question is not so simple. We think there is a sane middle way between that of undertaking to "police the world" and that of "leaving the nations of Europe to stew in their own juice." This last phrase is not Professor Beard's, of course, but in the very week when his article was published I heard it publicly used by a fairly prominent supporter of his views. I feel sure the misrepresentation is not conscious and wilful. It is nevertheless unjust and un-scholarly.

Much worse than this, however, is Professor Beard's diatribe against the 40,000,000 Americans who cannot boast of native parentage on both sides of the house. They are "foreigners in letter or spirit," he declares, and on the next page they are "aliens in fact" — a phrase devised to include 26,000,000 who are natives of this country and at least 6,000,000 who have, at considerable cost in time and money, voluntarily become citizens, not to mention those who have taken the first steps toward naturalization or who are either too young or of too recent arrival to have done so. Such phrases are clever, but they are not — well, I think they are not quite ingenious.

These people, says Professor Beard, "treat the United States as a boarding house, not as the permanent home of a people engaged in trying to make a civilization in their land." This boarding house motif runs through the whole piece, and thoroughly vitiates it as anything but an appeal to nativistic prejudice and passion. There are other things in the article, but they are both perverted and obscured by this false approach.

We expect something very different from the author of *The Rise of American Civilization*. The man who wrote that book knew that, in every decade of our history, immigrants and children of immigrants were doing their full share in the laborious task of providing the material basis for civilization in this country and were at the same time bringing diverse cultural gifts from many lands to enrich the superstructure; that in each generation a good number of them, handicapped though they often were by differences of language and manners as well as by lack of worldly goods, honestly earned distinction as inventors, artists, scientists, teachers, administrators, as champions of humane causes, as interpreters of the Old World to the New and of the New World to the Old, — yes, and as true patriots in this adopted home; and that the undistinguished majority even though their ways might for a while seem uncouth to neighbors of somewhat earlier arrival, were on the whole as well behaved as descendants of Pilgrims.

I do not think that twenty-two years ago Professor Beard took seriously the official pretence that opposition to President Wilson's sudden decision that we must enter the World War was mainly due to "emotional interests in co-nationals in other countries." If he did, or if he does, let me suggest a factual study of what happened that year in the 98 per cent native American state of Oklahoma. And if he thinks that the people who today reject the outworn dogmas of isolation are therefore "hell-bent" on war, or that they are in the main "members of the boarding house" — why, as O. Henry would put it, his statistics lack verification.

ALGERNON LEE

New York City.

SIR: Dr. Beard is hot-and-bothered about these "foreigners now boarding here." If the various foreign elements are trying to steer this country into war, it is significant that Dr. Beard makes no case against the only actually vociferous segment of a foreign group — the German-American Bund. In my own Polish group, I know it to be a fact that whatever tempered sympathy those born on the other side may have for their old homeland, we American-born condemn, and would be sincerely ashamed of, any similar sympathies on our part.

It may be true that some foreigners consider this country a "boarding house," but in all honesty it should be admitted that every opportunity in the world has been given these people to feel that way about the United States. The evaluation through the years by the folk on Dr. Beard's side of the tracks, of these later immigrants and their offspring as just so much scum, couldn't very well enhance a superpatriotic fervor in them. Whatever insecurity (unjustified) the pure Americans feel from this quarter must be blamed on these Americans themselves. That fear is simply a matter of bad conscience on the part of such as Dr. Beard.

JOHN SZYMANSKI

*Los Angeles,
California.*

COMMENT BY DR. BEARD

SIR: Judging by criticisms of my article, either I cannot write the English language or my critics cannot read it. For the sake of clearing up some confusion I shall try to state simply what I did not say and what I did say. I did not tell foreigners in America to go back home. I poured out no "flood of wanton insult." I did not in any way intimate that foreigners here are less worthy than any other people.

I did say that there are large bodies of foreigners and foreign-born persons in the United States. I said that this fact makes it well nigh impossible for the United States to pursue a realistic policy based on American as distinguished from British, German, or Italian

interests. I said that "resident foreigners" — not *all* or *the* resident foreigners — treat the United States as a boarding house. I said that foreign groups make a frightful din when the interests of their co-nationals are involved. I believe that informed and sober readers will agree with me that these are facts and that they are relevant to any discussion of American foreign policy.

Attacks on me for citing these facts are to me only additional proof that these facts are of vital significance for any consideration of an American foreign policy based on American interests, as distinguished from a foreign policy influenced by the interests of the other nationalities who are hard at work on American public opinion. I am not denying to any foreigners or foreign-born American citizens the right to express their opinions. Nor am I surprised that they get mad when I refer to the fact that they are expressing opinions.

CHARLES A. BEARD

*New Milford,
Connecticut.*

MORE ABOUT THE SOUSE

SIR: Stanley Walker's thesis that newspapermen had more fun and *were* more fun in the Front Page Era is as sound as the contention that more citizens of Amarillo, Texas, carried more guns in 1889 than in 1939. Today a reporter finds it very hard to maintain an appearance of swashbuckling on an assignment-schedule that sends him from a convention of the Women's National Republican Club in the afternoon to a Save Slovakia rally in the evening. No member of Mr. Walker's city staff failed to sense the dismal sagging of professional life that began after 1931. Gangster trials featured more statistics than gunplay. Technocracy upset everybody. (It took a pretty good reporter to write about Technocracy after twenty highballs.) A reform administration cleaned up the dark, interesting substrata of politics. Even city editors admitted Washington had superseded New York, in New York's own papers, as No. 1 news center. Reporting — 95 per cent of it — became repeating what somebody *said*,

rather than what someone *did*. If the current reporter is, as Mr. Walker says, dull, serious-minded, socially conscious, it must mean city editors want him that way. They hire him. Plenty of lively, engaging souses want jobs. But a serious-minded, abstemious moppet thrives more hardily, no doubt, on a daily diet of crop control, utilities, and stabilization.

LINCOLN BARNETT

New York City.

THOSE "GOOD OLD DAYS"

SIR: Channing Pollock, in "I Am a Reactionary," betrays either his complete lack of any philosophy of history or his willingness to ignore any such philosophy. He wishes to go back to the "good old days." So do I. So do we all. But how in the name of all that's holy does he propose to do it? Does he plan to turn the clock back? Will he hang a 25-year-old calendar on his office wall? Will he roll his 1910 automobile out of the garage? Is he going to throw his radio on the junk heap?

What he ignores is the fact that certain definite conditions which existed then, and which today do not exist, gave rise to those "good old days." We cannot create those conditions by legislation; we cannot create them by electing either conservatives or reactionaries to public office; we cannot, in fact, create them at all. Those conditions are gone, and let Mr. Pollock remember that the new result of his "good old days" was the automatic creation of these new days. Likewise, let him remember that what is to come in the future will not come from the past but from the present.

THOMAS NOYES DONALDSON

*Tucson,
Arizona.*

PAGING MR. KELLY

SIR: I never read a more idiotic argument than Fred Kelly's article on unemployed people, in your April issue. His idea seems to be that these unemployed are a "God-sent" group for which we should be thankful, be-

cause they keep us working. Let's follow his line of reasoning a little further. These unemployed people make work for others: logical conclusion — more unemployed people will make more work. So why not scour the earth for all the unemployed? Those who can't get work, those who won't work, and those who are unable to work.

So all these individuals would make work and all the others would have plenty of work. What a Utopia; what a hell! All these employed people would be kept busy working; and also busy hopping to keep even with the tax collector. The taxpayer would finally reach the end of his endurance — also the end of his money — and then we'd have more strikes because the taxpayer would simply have to get more money. If he got it, the manufacturer would have to raise his prices to make expenses (lots of them are in the red now) and thus we would continue running around in the circle which enclosed this hellish Utopia. Like a dog running after its tail. . . .

L. THORNTON

*Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania.*

SMALL-TOWN PUBLISHER SQUAWKS

SIR: That rare combination of sneer and whine in your last issue should have been entitled: A *Small-Time* EDITOR SQUAWKS. Main burden of his squeal is that he gets pushed around by "pressure groups" and doesn't dare attack anything but the weather. But a small-town monopoly newspaper, far from being a football is a dynamite-keg, likely to blow the pants off anybody who smacks it, even by mistake. I cite national figures, not my own books, when I emphasize that his income from that 7000-circulation sheet is surpassed by few other vested interests, utilities, or monopolies (he is all three, combined) in his town. Without his good will, no election can be sure of being won, no business can enjoy maximum prosperity, no charity drive go through, nor even a club successfully be established. He can dictate twelve times as often,

and twice as loud, as the bank at which he scolds.

The key to the mystery of "Small-Time Editor" is his blanket indictment of his fellow citizens as "vulgar, grubby, stupid, hypocritical, and intolerant." He forgets that to be a William Allen White, a Sherwood Anderson, or an Ed Howe calls for deep understanding of its inhabitants and an affection for them in the first place. If he would stop kicking his town's pants and study its basic anatomy, he would be able to move it a lot farther ahead. He couldn't start better than by reading Elizabeth Hughes' wise little study of a small town, *Smith Street, U.S.A.* in your same issue.

OWNER-EDITOR OF A 5000-CIRCULATION
PAPER

*North Tonawanda,
New York.*

ESCAPE FROM SPAIN

SIR: In the April issue in which you accuse some of our liberals of being totalitarian, you include a story by a former American communist who escaped from Loyalist Spain. The tone of this article, I should say, is subtly fascist. For he is implying that the Loyalist cause is communistic, that the International Brigade was made up of communists, and he says outright that he no longer believes in what he fought for. This is definitely a fascist approach. For Hitler and Mussolini admit themselves that they saved Spain from communism!

The author of the story to which I refer is using tactics which are notoriously fascist — the pinning of a "red" label on a liberal cause. And I assume that in allowing this article to be printed in a magazine which you edit, you sanction his point of view. Apparently you dislike the totalitarian liberal, as represented by the *Nation*, the *New Republic*, and the *New Masses*, but you are willing to concede a lot to the totalitarian who is not a liberal. Therefore I conclude that it is not totalitarianism, but liberalism, to which you object.

BARBARA FRANK

Washington, D. C.

SIR: I take it for granted that your recent articles on Spain — by William G. Ryan and Irving Pflaum — will bring down the fearful word “fascist” on their heads and yours. That’s how certain liberals, scared of facing the truth, are “demolishing” the articles by former General Krivitsky in the *Saturday Evening Post*. That’s how they are “demolishing” the truths told by your contributors. But these gentry are scarcely helping their professed principles when they cannot muster the courage to face unpleasant facts.

And the facts are deucedly unpleasant for people who are opposed to fascism. It is becoming more and more clear that the communists ran the show on the Loyalist side, and ran it for purposes other than those of saving the Spanish Republic. In a way it may be said that the Kremlin itself introduced fascist methods on the other side, and thus killed the fighting spirit of the anti-Franco groups.

That is the picture being drawn by persons, all of them opposed to Franco and his backers, close to the events. They doubtless know they will be called names for their pains, but feel it their duty to tell the truth. Incidentally, it’s not a new picture. It’s only new to the general reading public. The labor press which is not under Stalin’s thumb, here and abroad, has told plenty of the ugly story of communist terror behind the Loyalist lines and what it did to help the anti-government side to win.

L. S. ORVIETO

Chicago.

SIR: “Escape From Loyalist Spain,” by William G. Ryan, in the April *MERCURY*, is an assault upon the intelligence of all who know Spain, Valencia, and conditions since the war. First, it would have been impossible to have cut loose ten launches. All launches and boats at the water-front are fastened by chains and padlocked. And I assure you there never was an under-water cable there to snarl launches; and the piers are so arranged that stretching such a cable would be impossible; and if so the sag would permit light launches to pass over.

Further, the author says his get-away ship

had a deckload of lumber that was kept on while running down the coast of Spain. Since when has lumber been shipped from Spain to England or from England to Spain? And do you know how deckloads of lumber are stacked? All the lumber is of the same length, so how would a cavity be made to hide a man without sawing out a vast number of sections in the middle and repiling? But the most absurd part to those who know English freighters is that the hero wanders about, a stowaway, for days, without any notice taken by mates or captain. Both would jeopardize their hard-won jobs by permitting this, and imagine the risk to the ship and owner, and all the complications involved, should the affair come to be known!

AL-HAJ AL-FORD IBN-ROOS

Vanadium,
New Mexico.

THE AUTHOR REPLIES

SIR: Nothing was said in my article about a cargo of lumber loaded on the deck. The cargo going in was coal and boxes, which the sailors said contained machine guns and airplane parts; going out, oranges and almonds. Nothing was said about the small pile of lumber (used for repairing partitions and so on in the boat and having nothing to do with cargo) being all the same length. The article says, “arranging so it *looked* like a solid stack of heavy fifteen foot planks.” The cable was there whether Mr. Roos likes it or not. At the time it looked as though it might cost me my life and I am not likely to forget it. He doubts the stowaway part. Perhaps he will think that the records of the Stipendiary Magistrate’s Court in Kingston on Hull, England, for July 4, 1938 are absurd. Or the statements of the ship’s officers to H.M. immigration officers of that city that they did not know of my presence on the ship. It’s all in the British Court Records, the records of the American Consul at Hull, and the records of the British Home Secretary.

Mr. Roos has imagined the chains, padlocks, and piers which were so placed that cables could not be stretched across. I don’t know whether he has ever been in Valencia

or not, but I *do* know there were no chains or padlocks, and there was a cable stretched across which did *not* sag enough to let us get over with the larger boats. I have been in Valencia several times, as my Loyalist military documents show.

More serious than these silly doubts of the facts, of course, is the allegation of "fascism" by some readers of my article. This does not take me unaware. I know precisely how people like Miss Frank feel. It seems to them monstrous that anyone should doubt the disinterestedness of the Russian and other communists in the Loyalist camp. In fact, I feel with them. It *is* monstrous that under the flag of idealism and under slogans of democracy, the communists should have succeeded in putting over their own brand of totalitarianism on Spain.

The facts of that situation are coming out. The article in your May issue by Mr. Pflaum, the United Press correspondent in Spain, is only one of many that are sure to shed light on that whole affair.

WILLIAM G. RYAN

*Milwaukee,
Wisconsin.*

IN PRAISE OF FRANCO

SIR: In "Russia's Role In Spain," in your May issue, Irving Pflaum makes this statement; "The victory of Franco and his allies is a genuine triumph for totalitarianism. A Stalin victory would merely have been a different variety of totalitarianism." In connection with this, your attention is called to the present government of Portugal, under Dr. Oliveira Salazar. Portugal is one of the best governed countries in Europe, if not *the* best. Franco's government of Spain will be fully as good as Salazar's in Portugal. The fact that Franco helped restore to the Spanish people the right to worship God and helped to set them on the road to prosperity even while he was battling with and defeating the Loyalist communists, proves my statement beyond refutation. Recently I ran across the following statements in the Boston *Globe*:

"Franco speeds evacuation of German and

Italian troops as follows." "The German Condor Legion, 5000 strong, is preparing to sail from Vigo." "These with 12,000 Italians await only the final review of Generalissimo Franco in Madrid before departing."

Does this not favor my side of the story and not that of the pink- or red-tinged Mr. Pflaum?

E. J. FITZGIBBON

*Dorchester,
Massachusetts.*

UNDERGROUND GERMANY

SIR: Mr. Liepmann in his article "Underground Germany" tells of the "powerful" transmitters operated in Germany to annoy the Brown Shirt dignitaries with denunciations of Hitler. Every child knows that such transmitters can be located at once, besides the fact that it would be impossible to obtain the parts and assemble such station in Germany without knowledge of the authorities. Similar nonsense is told about the concentration-camp population. As a matter of fact Germany under the Nazi regime is a quite extraordinarily orderly country and has very few prisoners as compared with the United States. The total number of prisoners in concentration camps never exceeded 12,000 in the last years. The Gestapo seems to be so efficient that the "underground forces" like Mr. Liepmann, who flourished under the Republican Government, have more or less given up; obviously the reason he is here today. In fact, there were several times more criminals in the penal institutes before the Nazis came to power.

C. VON WEDEL

*West Orange,
New Jersey.*

FAME FOR SHELBY

SIR: Frisco had its earthquake; Chicago had its fire; Boston had its tea party; the Klondike had its gold rush — but Shelby had its fight! It was with real pleasure that I read Eric Thane's "Montana Picks a Fight" in the

April *MERCURY*. With equal pleasure, and a deep chuckle or two, I read this editorial comment in the Shelby *Tribune*, which said: "Future articles under the caption of Eric Thane will be given little consideration for truthfulness by local people."

Having read this, I turned to page 7 of the same paper and noted a half-page historical article written for the Montana Newspaper Association, one of the largest news organizations in the state, by the "fibbing author." Of such as this is humor made.

AZILE A. PENNER

*Cut Bank,
Montana.*

CULTURE IN FRANCE

SIR: If, as the ironical Southerner who writes "I Like the North" in your May issue says, the French have developed culture in traveling, it must be of very recent date. The worst subway hogs in New York can't compare with the average Frenchman when traveling with several pieces of excess baggage, which he invariably spreads all over all the extra seats in the compartment. The only thing to do is to place it all on the floor while you take your seat, and watch him rave and tear his hair.

This writer, who ironically says he likes the North, gives about as distorted a picture of New York City as the lady who recently wrote in your magazine on the South. If a person is looking for culture in either the North or the South, he can find it. But in the North he will not find it in the slums; and in the South he will not find it among illiterate whites and Negroes.

EX-NEW YORKER

*Tulsa,
Oklahoma.*

WHO'S INTELLIGENT NOW?

SIR: In the April "State of the Union," Albert Jay Nock states, "The character and qualities of the average Roman of the Empire can best be imagined by posing him as a composite, say, of Henry Ford, Herbert Hoover,

and Charles Evans Hughes — resourceful, pushing, dogged, matter-of-fact, unscrupulous, unintelligent, legalistic, grasping." Unintelligent these?

Hell and damnation, if Mr. Nock and most of the others who earn their bread and butter by laying words end to end, knew a fraction as much about their trade, or pursued it with a half of the intelligence that Ford has devoted to the manufacture of cars, Hoover to the mining industry, or Hughes to the law, they would not make such asses of themselves.

A. E. CORNELL

*Montoursville,
Pennsylvania.*

OUR TOTALITARIAN LIBERALS

SIR: Your editorial "Our Totalitarian Liberals" struck exactly the right note. Since the defection of the *Nation* and *New Republic* we need just such a magazine as *THE MERCURY* promises to be.

JOHN DEWEY

*Key West,
Florida.*

SIR: This is to thank you for your April editorial. It has got to the point that half of the so-called Liberals think you are a wild reactionary if you do not believe that the Stalin brand of communism constitutes the New Jerusalem. Personally, I am bored to death with those "liberals" who talk so much about civil rights in the United States but look forward to a system under which no civil rights would be secure.

JONATHAN DANIELS

*Raleigh,
North Carolina.*

SIR: It certainly looks as if you had struck a good gait as a starter. You can't lambaste the "liberals" too mercilessly. They have made an awful mess of their jobs. And certainly Nock's effort to make us culture-conscious and culture-wishful should be encouraged in every way possible.

ELLIS O. JONES

Los Angeles

SIR: May I thank you for myself and many American liberals who have tried to avoid the lunatic fringe while retaining sufficient sanity to avoid being swept by palpable propaganda into irrationality, for your "Totalitarian Liberals." Nothing said on the subject is sounder or truer.

FREDERICK W. BEEKMAN

Paris,
France.

Dean of Holy Trinity

ADVICE-TO-THE-EDITOR DEPARTMENT

SIR: If there is a lake convenient, please go jump into it. If not, the Atlantic or even the Hudson will do. And don't fail to take along with you to the depths all your collection of dyspeptic, misanthropic, soured contributors. They all have in common apparently their hatred for the human species (excluding themselves) and never manage to see anything good, noble or even tolerable in people.

I admit that their attitude makes good spicy reading. Maybe it is good business for a magazine. But life isn't the crazy, dopey, crippled kind of thing your pages reflect. Whether you like it or not, there are such things as real affections, real idealism, nobility of character, not only in meek little people but even in political leaders, public personalities, etc. For all its faults, human life is an exhilarating adventure. Why must you treat it only as a sidesplitting farce?

Ottawa,
Canada.

HUGH J. WOOD

IN BRIEF

"What books, new or old, have you read recently?" We asked this question of a number of Americans in different walks of life. Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt writes that she found *All This and Heaven Too*, by Rachel Field, "most interesting." The First Lady adds that she is "naturally interested in a book called *Odyssey of an American Family*. . . . My brother conceived the idea and collaborated with Samuel Duff McCoy in producing the volume. Perhaps because of my personal inter-

est in the stories which relate to various branches of our family, I am not a good judge of how the average reader will enjoy this book. . . . The story covers many different strains and shows how much lies back of our family to explain the present activities of this generation." . . . Clarence S. Marsh, Vice-President of the American Council on Education, has warm words for four books he has read recently: *Listen the Wind*, by Anne Lindbergh; *Action in Aquila*, by Hervey Allen; *Youth Tell Their Story*, by Howard M. Bell; and *This Peace*, by Thomas Mann. . . . Prof. Louise Pound, University of Nebraska, recommends from her recent reading: *This Was a Poet*, by George F. Whicher; *Philosopher's Holiday*, by Irwin Edman; *Grandma Called It Carnal*, by Bertha Damon; and *Assignment in Utopia*, by Eugene Lyons. . . . Joyously, and with justification, Bart Richards of New Castle, Pa., pounces on errors in last month's article on the great baseball scandal. The reference to Senator Harding, "within a month elected President," should have read, of course, "within thirteen months," since Harding was not elected until 1920. Also, the Black Sox Grand Jury handed in its report on October 6, 1920 and not — as a typographical error had it — in 1930. We stand humbly corrected. . . . Evelyn Scott, the novelist, reports that the April *MERCURY* was the subject of discussion at Skidmore College, where she is teaching. . . . Protest against excessive official intrusion on the ordinary American's life comes from E. V. Wilcox, of Chevy Chase, Maryland. "We have too many leaders," he says, "and far too many followers. If we had fewer millions willing to wear a collar and leash, and more self-starters, self-goers, self-guiders and self-sufficers in our population, we should soon begin to get somewhere." . . . The article by Dr. Beard in the April issue stirred up editorial comment, pleasant and otherwise, throughout the country. Early returns, as we go to press, indicate that Ulric Bell's incisive portrait of John Nance Garner is also acting as a stimulant to editorial indignation and enthusiasm in the dailies of the nation.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES (*Buchmanism: Opiate For the Classes*) was literary editor of the *Dictionary of American Biography*, and edited *The Bible, Arranged To Be Read As Living Literature*. ROY A. BENJAMIN, JR. (*Ghost Goes to College*) is a graduate of the Columbia School of Journalism at present on the staff of the New York *World-Telegram*. DR. JOSEPH T. BOLOTIN ("Painless" Childbirth) has practiced medicine in Chicago for the past fourteen years. ROGER BURLINGAME (*Don't Be Your Own Architect!*) has written many books, the latest being *March of the Iron Men* (Scribner's). EDITH CHERRINGTON (*Surf-Board Rider*) lives in Pasadena, California. CATHARINE CONNELL (*Spring Song*) is a writer of short stories and articles whose work has appeared chiefly in women's magazines. HERBERT COREY (*Elliott Roosevelt: The President's Problem Child*) lives in Washington, where, he says, politics are "louder and funnier than anywhere else"; he is a well known magazine writer. MAJOR GEORGE FIELDING ELIOT (*Germany Can't Win!*) noted author and lecturer on military subjects, wrote the best-selling *Ramparts We Watch* (Reynal and Hitchcock). PHIL HAMILTON (*San Francisco: A Dying City*), a west coast newspaperman, is currently engaged in literary work in San Francisco. WILL IRWIN (*Education for Ward-Heelers*) has, in the past thirty years, tried his hand at most forms of writing; he lives in New York City. ALFRED KAZIN (*America at High Noon*) is a frequent contributor of literary criticism to the New York *Herald Tribune* and other newspapers and magazines. ALAN MACDONALD (*The General Slocum Disaster*) is a well known newspaperman who writes for various magazines. JOHN MCCARTEN (*Father Coughlin: Holy Medicine Man*), a former associate editor of *Fortune*, has contributed to many newspapers and magazines. ANDRÉ MAUROIS (*Misdeal*) is the noted French biographer and novelist. LEONARD ROSS (*Peep Show*) will shortly be represented on the publishers' lists by *Funny Places*, of which "Peep Show" is a chapter. GEORGE S. SCHUYLER (*Negroes Reject Communism*), author of two novels, is on the editorial staff of the Pittsburgh *Courier*. LOUIS STODDARD (*Decoration Day*) lives at Esperance, New York. LUELLA STONE (*Plantation Girl*) is a native of the South. JESSE STUART (*These Dark Hills*) is a frequent contributor of verse and stories to THE MERCURY and other magazines; his books include *Head o' W-Hollow* and *Beyond the Dark Hills* (Dutton). ADELAIDE WALKER (*Pioneer's Return*) was born in Wyoming and now lives on Cape Cod; she has been an actress, editor, and playreader.



The Bethlehem Steel Quiz

TRY IT ON THE FAMILY

Like the Walrus, this month's Bethlehem Quiz talks of many things—of safety and age groups and alloys and steel terminology.

To answer the questions requires no great knowledge of the steel industry, and you may glean bits of information that will come in handy some day when there's a decided shallow in the steady flow of small talk.

Score 20 for each correct answer. 40 is fair, 60 is good and 80 is excellent.

Answers on page x.

The campaign for safety in Bethlehem Steel plants began in 1916. In the succeeding 23 years accidents in the Bethlehem organization have been reduced:

- (a) 81.1% (b) 12% (c) 99%
(d) 33.33% (e) 14.5%

2. Perhaps you have been under the impression that the steel industry is populated largely by men under 40.

As a matter of fact this company's employees over the age of 40 make up . . . per cent of the total number employed:

- (a) 51% (b) 98.6% (c) 43%
(d) 25% (e) 39.6%

3. Nickel is widely used in alloying steels to:

- (a) *make them shiny*
(b) *increase their toughness, stiffness, strength and hardness*
(c) *enable fabricators to bend the steel easily*

4. In steel parlance a channel is a:

- (a) *passageway between drop forges*
(b) *rolled structural shape with a section like this: [*
(c) *trade outlet*

5. The "Panama," now in service between New York and Panama, is the world's first passenger vessel of completely fireproof construction. Do you know the name of the steel company that built this outstanding American vessel?

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Answers to Bethlehem Steel Quiz

(See page ix)

1. (a) 81.1%. At the Cambria Plant there were 91 days operation without loss time accident, representing a total of 3,217,736 man hours.
2. (c) Employees over 40 make up 39.6% of the total.
3. (b) Increase their toughness, stiffness, strength and hardness.
4. (b) A rolled structural shape with a section like this: [
5. Bethlehem Steel Company.

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FORUM

EDITED BY HENRY GODDARD LEACH

Feature Articles for June

Why Hate the Jews?

STRUTHERS BURT

Who are the individuals in back of the anti-Semitic movement in this country? What are their motives and objectives? How are these activities financed? Mr. Burt, in this second article of his series answers these pertinent questions.

Impressions of America

G. B. STERN

Thinking Ourselves Into Trouble

JAMES THURBER

America on the Warpath

K. R. MARTIN

Are Refugees a Liability?

FRANK RITCHIE

versus

HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD

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The Book Forum

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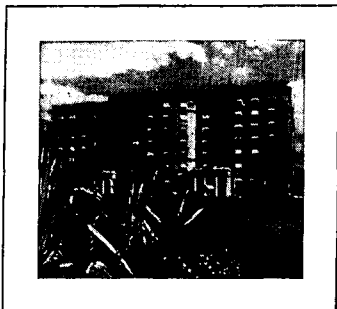
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The Best in Boston . . .



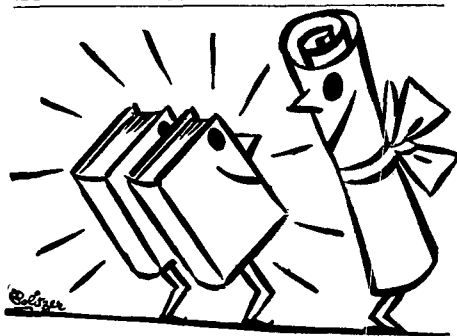
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ORCHESTRAL

***†† *Overture to Tannhaeuser, Wagner:* (Columbia Album X-123, \$3.25). One of the finest achievements in Sir Thomas Beecham's long list of Overtures made with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. It is undoubtedly the best recording of the Dresden version, the standard in concert use, not to be confused with the Paris version, recently magnificently recorded by the Philadelphia Orchestra (Victor Album 530); and it offers a new ecstatic solemnity in the Pilgrims' Chorus, abetted by rich reproduction of brass and drums. There is a resonant and exciting performance of the *Polovetzki March* from *Prince Igor* on the fourth surface.

***††† *Fêtes d'Hébé: Musette and Tambourin en rondeau, Rameau; and Minuet, Boccherini:* (Columbia P-17131, \$1.00). Three highly sophisticated little masterpieces, beautifully played by a Symphony Orchestra conducted by François Ruhlmann, on a single 10-inch disk. The recording (of the Rameau) is exquisitely transparent at the top, and satisfyingly solid at the bottom, of its range. The re-orchestration used is the admirable one of Jean Weckerlin; and there is no other orchestral recording of these pieces, of which the *Tambourin* was also composed by Rameau for harpsichord.

***†† *Gymnopédies No. 1 and 2, Satie:* (Victor 1965, \$1.50). The Satie-Debussy indebtedness to Moussorgsky is revealed at somewhat exorbitant length even in an abbreviated recording, wherein No. 2 is on disks for the first time. Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra play the little things with marked proficiency; and the reproduction is good except for some faults of balance.

***†† Symphonies No. 67 in F and 80 in D Minor, Haydn: (Victor Album 536, \$9.00). Two of the Symphonies exhumed by Dr. Alfred Einstein from the British Museum. No. 67 is diverting and euphonious; No. 80 is superb. The brightly recorded performances by the talented little orchestra of the New Friends of Music under the deft and scholarly stick of Dr. Fritz Stiedry are the first in America, the disks having been made before the public concert.

***†† George Gershwin Music: (Decca Album 31, \$5.50). The collected edition of those works by Gershwin intended for performance in concert halls. They are properly performed by Paul Whiteman's Concert Orchestra, which introduced them, and by Roy Bargy and Rosa Linda at the piano. The album includes *Rhapsody in Blue*, *Second Rhapsody*, *Juban Overture*, and *An American in Paris*. The recording is full-bodied and distinct.

CONCERTI

***†† *Zigeunerweisen, Sarasate*: (Victor 15246, \$2.00); *Havanaise, Saint-Saens*: (Victor 15347, \$2.00). Two concerted bravura pieces in superb performances by a great fiddler recorded on a day of full form. This *Zigeunerweisen* is not going to be excelled. The violinist is Jascha Heifetz; the orchestral background, with a heavy bass, is supplied by the London Symphony Orchestra under John Barbirolli.

***†† *Triple Concerto in A Minor, Bach*: (Victor Album 534, \$6.50). This felicitous Bach was a judicious choice for recording. It has been accomplished with the services of Yella Pressl (harpsichord), Frances Blaisdell (flute), and William Kroll (Violin), all first-rate players, with a string orchestra directed by Carl Bamberger. The records would have been better with more body in the band; but the tonal quality is good, and the album unquestionably desirable.

***†† *Piano Concerto in D, Haydn*: (Columbia Album X-118, \$3.25). This spirited and decorative score is given an attractively vivacious interpretation by Marguerite Roesgen-Champion at the piano, and by the conductor, Marius-François Gaillard. This team is adept at Eighteenth Century music. Bright recording has captured the piano very well, and also a number of ragged edges in the work of the accompanying Paris Symphony.

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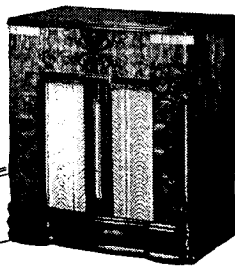
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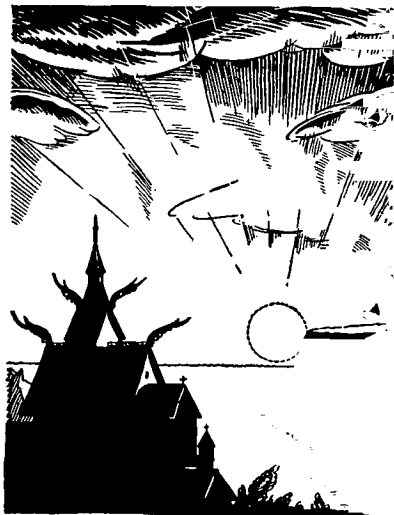
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